

De immensa dei
misericordia.

A sermon of the excedyng
great mercy of god, made
by þ moste famous doctour
maister Eras. Rot. Transla-
ted out of Latine into En-
glissh, at the request of the
moste honorable and ver-
tuous lady, the lady
Margaret Count-
esse of Salis-
bury.



To the most honorable lady the lady
Countesse of Salisburp Gentian Heruet
her humble seruant greeting.



Eynge and vnderstandinge
mooste honourable lady your great
mynde and depe affection bothe to
warde al maner of teryng, and spes-
cially towarde that, whiche either excieth or trea-
cheth vertue & goodnes, and concerneth the way
of our saluacion, I haue translated out of Latin
in to englishe a sermon of Erasmus of the mercy
of god: the whiche translated for you, and dedicate
vnto your ladyshyp, I thought it shuld be a good
deede, if for your ladisshyps pleasure it were prin-
ted & spred abrode: And where as afore lerned me
only dyd get out both pleasure and great frute in
redyng of this boke, nowe every man as wel rude
as lerned may haue this sermon of the mercy of
god as comon vnto him as þ mercy of god it selfe
is. And as touchyng þ comedacion either of the
autoz or of þ warke, I knowe the tediumes of my
wyt moche more slender thā that I can be able to
beare the weyght of suche an enterprise, & I reke
to be moche better to holde my toge vterly frō þ
preysyng thā of them to speke to littel, & for faute
of wyt to minishe their excellēce. Yet netherlesse it
semeth expediet vnto me, þ by your ladisshyp bref-
ly other folke may knowe how noble is the autoz
of this warke, & how moche we be bounde to hym
for it. The autoz of the boke is Erasmus Rotero-

Damus, whom nyr preyses can no more ennable,
thā the son with a caudel may be made clerer. He
is the man to whom in lecnyng no lyuyng man
may hym selfe cōpare: and nat only passeth them
that be alyue, but also from the most part of olde
autors hath beraft y price, and nat onely paynes
and gentyls but also Chisten doctois. He is y mā
that whan in his sp̄st dayes trough was far hyd
in the depe beines of the grounde, and more ouer
it was prohibited as a thyng being worthy deth
y no man shulde for her enquere, he dyd nat suffre
the woldē to be cōfounded with suchē a marue-
lous darknes, and either he hath dygged y
m̄p h̄mes of trough, or at the leſt he hath restored
y ſree libetie to ſerche her. He is the mā that to
Iſaac may be compared, the whiche dygged y
the goodly ſprunging welles, that the Philistēs
distrōied and with dypte & donge ouerſyld. The
clere ſpringes of the holy scripture, that y Philis-
tēs had ſo troubled, ſo marred, and ſo defiled, y
no man coude dynke or haue the true taste of the
water, they be nowe by his labour and diligence
to their olde purenes and clerenes ſo restored y no
ſpotte nor etchly ſyliche in them remayneth. And
though y Philistēs dyd al that they coude to di-
ſturb hym from his holy purpose, and y amōge
the people by the reaſon of them he was greatly
hated and enuied, yet at the laſt as it chanceth al-
way unto them that with a bold ſtōmake in their
good dedes do contynue, excellent vertue hath o-
uercome eny, whan fro this mā there can come
out

out nothing but both it is excedyng pfitable and
on every side all perfect, me thynketh þ this littell
treatise being in every poynt as perfect as any oþ
ther be in profit/nat only giueth no place but also
greatly passeth: for where afore the warkes that
he made were pfitable but specially to one kynde
of men/his Proverbes, his Newe Testament,
and many other treatyses onely to lerned men/of
the boke of þ Instruction of princis þ moste pro
fit redudeth to princes. This boke only with the
boke called þ knife or wepo of a Christe sowdiour
hath so far spredde abrode his fruteful branches,
that ther is no mā but great frute gether he may
out of it, except he that thynketh that it maketh
no matter whether he be damped or saued. And
as for the knyfse of a Christe sowdiour whiche he
nameth Enchiridion, it bryngeth a man out of the
way of vices/and leadeth hym in the way of ver
tue and the path of saluation. This littel treatise
of the mercy of god teacheth a man to ascribe no
thyng to hym selfe/but all to gether to the mercy
of god/seeing that the ffe wyl it selfe that we be in
dewed with all/is the ffe gyfte of almighty god/
and except it were by him made clerer/it shuld be
so darke with the rust of the original synne, that þ
image of vertue in it shulde never be fast printed.
And who so euer beyng entred in to þ kyngdome
of god by baptisme doth ascribe any thyng to his
owne wisedome/to his merites, and to his deser
uyngeþ/and nat aknowlegeth euery where his
owne feblenes/trusting vpon þ ffe grace & mercy

of almyghty god. it is to be drade/leest for mercy
that is euery where redy for hym that calleth/he
proue the soze and rigorous iustice of god. Howe
let vs se whither it be more expediet for a mannes
saluacio, either by iustice to be feareed from synne,
or by mercy to be enticid bothe to loue and to ver-
tue. Justyce with her soze thretynge cōpellet h
a man to flee vice/and engēdret h in hym a certayn
bodly feare/that it is an odious thyng unto hym
to cōmit synne/nat for þ hate it selfe of sinne, but
for feare of punishemēt. Mercy cōtrary to it put-
teth before a mannes face the vnspekable loue of
god towarde hym, þ whiche so loued him, that he
dyd nat spare his onely sonne for his sake/ the in-
credible beufites/the infinite desire of his salua-
cion/the continuall callyng upon hym to bryng
hym to the euerlastyng blysse. Of þ other side she
sheweth hym as if it were in a glasse/the weakes-
nes and feblenes of a man/the perilles that he is
compassed about with/the calamites/the miseri-
þ wretchednes that on euery side do vterly hym
wrappe, and that in so many mischeues, there co-
meth no succour but fro the mercy of god/do nat
all these engēdze in hym a certaine chylde/she loue
towarde his fater/that he wyl performe his cō-
maundemētes/nat for feare of punishment/noz
for loue of rewarde, but for because it pleaseþ his
most louyng fater/ And that he accompted this
a very great rewarde to do the thyng that dothe
lyke suche a good fater. And where as it is sayd
that þ feare of our lord is the beginnyng of wise-
dom

dome, though the same feare somewhat concerneth
the drede of iustice, yet I reken that it is nat to be
taken for that bondly feare þ maketh vs to drede
the soze punyshementes, but for that that maketh
vs to loke about, that we do nothynge that shulde
displease our most louyng father, or els feare with
out loue longeth to a cruel tyrant, that careth nat
for the peoples hatred, so they feare him, and nat
to þ most mercifull lord & father of vs all, whose
loue towarde mankynde neither with minde can
be comprehended nor with wordes any thyng ex-
pressed. The whiche seyng that he loueth vs so
mochē, and that all our helpe and soccour cometh
from hym, let vs set al our trust and confidence in
hym, withdrawyng al our trust and our hope frō
al mortall thynges & from al mortall mē. þf we be
in nede, let vs cal vpo him, he is benigne, he is li-
beral, he gryueth gladlier than other do take, if so
þ we make hym nat a nygarde in askyng of smal
chýges & vnworthy of hym to be gryue. If we be
in synne let vs cal vpo his mercy, being sorry & re-
pentāt. Whan so euer a synner is truely repētant
he forgyueth al maner of synne. Here amōge mē
they þ do forgyue syn haue nat al an egall power:
som cases be reserved to þ pope, & of þ popes him
selfe power som do put a great dout; but god him
selfe is he þ hath rule both in heuē & in erth, there
is no dout þ of his autorite & power can be made.
If we despise to come to the euerlastyng felicite, &
eschewe the feareful peynes of hell, let vs beseeche
his mercy to kepe vs frō sinne, & gyue vs stregth
to fulfyll

to fulfyll his wyll and his comandementes / and so
done / let vs put vs al holle to his pleasure & mer-
cy / & let vs nat trust vpon certayn bayne prayres /
the whiche with moche errore be spred amoge men /
as though they had this vertue & power / þ who
so euer mubleth them vp shal eschewe euerlastyng
punyshementes. O subtle serpent / o disceitfull di-
uel / howe various / howe crafty be thynges / imagina-
cions : because he seeth þ fro our simple & stedfast
belue he can nat bryng vs awaie / he goeth about
to bryng vs in to an odious supersticousnes / and
because he seeth that that man can nat do amisse / þ
vpon the mercy of god setteth his holle trust / he ps-
suadeth rude and ignorant soles to set their trust
vpon baine thynges / that they shulde set only vpon
god. Surely suche he is / and he wyll never ceasse
to let vs fro our iourney heueward / out of whiche
place he was ouerthowen. But the mo wiles and
subtilties þ he worketh / the more grace & strengþ
god giueth vs to withstand hym. But it is tyme
most honorable lady to lay by my rude and vnclos-
quet lāgage / þ ye may here Erasm⁹ speke eloquent-
ly / and in yout owne motherþ tōge very playnly /
the whiche so comendeth to the heterþ þ unmeas-
urable and infinite mercy of god / þ who so euer
in his hart fast printeth it / he shal finde out of it a
maruelo⁹ great frute both to know his owne mis-
serie / and of god the infinite bounte / þ whiche two
thynges be most effectuouſ to directe vs to the es-
uerlastyng felicite / that is Christe Iesus / the
whiche preserue your ladyshyppe and all yours.

A sermo of the excedyng great mercy
of god made by Erasmus Bo-
terodamus.



Or as moche as I pour-
pose this daye to speake of the
greatnes of the mercies of our
lorde, Bretherne and systerne
most welbeloued in Christ, wi-
thout whose helpe mas frailte
and weakenes can naught do:
let vs all to gether with a common prayer beseeche
the mercy of the comon lorde of vs all, so to moue
the instrument of my tonge, and so to stree and
kendell your hertes, that as we shall departe hence
through the mercy of our lorde more plentiouslye
endewed with heuenly grace: so every man to his
neighbouwarde maye more abundantly vse the
warkes of mercy. Somie vse here to grete the vir-
gin moher, I denye nat every where moche hos-
nour ought to be gyuen her, but verily to our pur-
pose nowe me semeth more expedient, if ye folowe
me thus goynge before you:

Jesus Christe the almyghtye woerde of the euer-
lastynge fathur, that pmyself to be present where-
so cuer two or thre were assembled in thy name,
thou seest howe many in thy name be here gethe-
red. Wouchesafe therfore accordyng to the pmise,
to be amonge this compayne: that theyr hertes
lyghted through grace of the holp gooste, may vns-
derstante more fully the greatnessse of thy mercie:

Wherby we al to gether may with a lustier mynde
both yelde to the thakes for chy mercys, that so ofte
hath ben to vs shewed, & that mox desyrouslye in
all our necessites, we maye calle theron for helpe:
and lastely that we humble seruauntes maye the
mercy of our lord, that bn vs we haue largely p-
ued, to our power louyngly p;osolute on our felos,
weslyke wyse seruantes.

¶ that every man (as the rhetoriciens teache) is
right diligēt and attentive to here those thynges,
that he bnderstādeth shuld shapely touche hym:
than there oughte none of you to nodde or slepe in
this sermō tyme, seyng that the saluaciō of vs all
egally dependeth on the mercy of our lord: Noz
there is none so yonge nor so olde, of so lowe or so
high byrth, so poore nor so riche, so bōde nor so fre,
so counnyng nor so rude, so wicked nor so iuste, but
that he hath ofteyn tymes bothe proued the mercy
of our lord, and nedeth the mercy of our lord to
all thynges that he rightously goth about. What
matter more fauorable may be treated, than that
by the mercys of god, euerlastynge helth is prepa-
red for al folkes: Of very right therfore i this ser-
mon tyme, as many as be here present, ye shulde
nat onely take hede, but also be lusty and gladdie to
here hit: for who so euer doth loue and fauer hym
selfe, woll loue and fauer this sermon.

¶ Amonge the manyfolde yuels, whiche drawe
mankynde to euerlastynge dāmacion, there be two
chiese and p;incipall mylcheues: of whiche they
oughte specially to be ware, that loue vertue and
goodnes

goodnes, and desyre to come to the feloweshyp of
everlastyng felicite. They be these. To moche trust
on ones owne selfe and Disprete. The one cometh
of a presumptuous mynde agaynst god, that the
loue of ones selfe hath blynded: the other is engi-
ned one way by pondryng the great offences, an
other way by consydryng the ryghtous iugement
of god without remembraunce of his mercy. Both
these are so pestilent and cursed, that many doubt
whiche of them is more to be aborre. For what
is greater madnes or more lamentable than ma-
that is erth & ashes, whiche what so he is or may
do, is for hit all bounde to the goodnes of god: to
rebelle agaynst hym, of whom he was created, of
whom he was redemed, and of whom by so ma-
ny meanes he is called to the company of cuer-
stynglyfe: Is it nat a point of great vnkyndnes
to set nought by hym, of whom thou hast recey-
ued so many benefites: Is it nat a poynt of great
madnes to wyl to rebelle agaynst hym that may
destroy þ with a becke: Is it nat a great poynt of
wickednes nat to knowlege thy maker, nat to hos-
moure thy father, nat to loue thy saviour: Unhap-
py Lucifer was bold to do this syȝt, whiche ascri-
uyng to hym selfe, þ he stely receiued of almighty
god, sayd in his harte: I wyl get vpon aboue in he-
ue, I wyl exalte my seate aboue þ sterres of god,
I wyl syl upon the hyll of testimony in the sydes
of the Noȝt he wylde, I wyl clyme vpon aboue the
height of the cloudes, I wyl be lyke to almighty
god, But wolde to god þ his vnhappy fall myght.

at the leest straignt mortal creatures from folowynge
of his vngacious example if the wycked dede ic
selfe can nat seare them. Truly is god spared nat
proude presumptuous angels, but cast them heed-
lyng downe in to hell, and ordyned them straigntly
houde in cheynes to be kept tyll the daye of dome,
what deserueth mā a sely worme, whiche as now
were crept out of the erth, must shortly returne to
erthe agayne, is proude presumptuous & cesty as
gynst god. The more lo we and byle the codicion
of mā is, þ more abominable is his presumption,
desiryng to be egal with god. The ancient poetes
feyned, There rose a styrre on a tyme amonge the
goddis, that constrained Jupiter hym selfe to for-
sake heuen and flee in to Egypt, and there in an o-
ther shap to hym selfe: but a farre more myfches-
uous dede was þ the gyantes went about, which
confederated to gether agaynst Jupiter, dyd caste
hyls vpon hyls, þ they myght so coquere heuen &
expelle Jupiter thence. Ye may wel laughe these
tales that ye here be nat gospel: but yet þ erudite
olde tyme wolde signifie some what vnder the co-
uering of these fables, þ logeth to the expressyng
of mortall folks maners. Salomonus was heeds-
lyng thrown downe in to helle, because he con-
fected thōuder and lyghtnyng of Jupiter. Admit
it be but a fable: but howe many sely mortal men
haue ther ben, þ in dede & seriously wold haue he-
uenly honours done to them. Dyd nat god turne
Abugodonosor, that wold haue made hym selfe
a god, in to a brute beast, that fro a beast he shulde
returne

retourne to a humayne shappe. Great Alexander
wolde be take for Jupiters lōne / and suffred hym
selfe to be worshypped at his table. Domitius Ce
sar in all his letters patentes & pistols / and in his
cōmunication wolde be called boch god and lōrde.
Adrian ordeined þ Antinous shuld be worshipped
as a god. Why reherse I all this / whan it was a
soleinne thynge amonge the Romayns / after their
Emperours were deyded this lyfe / to make them
goddis. Some of them a lyue had godly honoures /
whiche offred to accept is wicked madnes / & to vs
surpe is desperate blyndnes. If auctorite of stori
es be of no great weyght / let vs here what þ apo
stel Paule to þ Thessalonices wrote of mero / truly
some interpretate thus: And þ creature of synne /
sayth he / were vncouered / þ childe of þdicio / whi
che is agaynst & is enhāsed aboue al þ is called god
& that is worshipped / so that he litteth in the tēple
of god / shewyge him selfe as though he were god.
But pauenture it shal seme no matuayle if some þ
worshypped for goddes / oxen / apes / dogges / and
thynges more vile / dōme stones / & wodde / wolde
hauē them selfe taken for goddes / as farre more
excellent than these thinges to whiche the people
dydde godly honoures. In the actis of the apostles /
Herode knowyng ther was but one god / of whose
honour no man coude be partener / suffred þ people
to crye to hym in his sermo: This is the boyce of
god & nat of a man: Shortly after he was stryke
by the angel of god that reuenged that iniury / he
the myserable god dyed of the lowsyre yuell: than

whiche no disease is more foule synkyng & peynfull. I wolde to god there were none amoge christens, that folowed the wickednes of Lucifer. I may nat say passe it. What: Luke ye that I shuld open somwhat of secrete cōfessiōns: What nedē it, whan in some countres in the market place in the churches, at dyner, souper, in playenge and sportyng we here al about they forſ were them selfe by the most honorable name of god, this þ I say is a lyght chynge: we here the name of god denied, þ holy name of Christe with many vile wordes blasphemēd: the fore synget bytē god thretned, þ thōme put betwēne the forſmeſt and myddell synget, that is done agaynst god fountayne of all glory, that is wont to be done agaynst an infamous pson for reproche and shame. Be there none amonge Christens, if they may be called Christens, whiche for reches þ they must shortly forgo, or foule bodily pleasure, or for transitory honours, forſake their owne prince, and make a wicked cōposition with they, too Satanas: the fourme of the oþre take, atones they forſ were what so euer cōfederaciō was made with Christe, and offre to helle part of they, body as the syrue frute, to þ prince wherof they vowed holly they, soule: Thes chyngeſ spred out we se punyshed dayly by open execution. What chynge lyke dyd Lucifer: for hym the son of god dyd nat, and yet he was nat so hardy to blasphemē god: he alonly desyred equal honour. That vnhappy cunstre, wherin somtyme were, v. mighty cities, nowe is a pestylent and abominable lake, for the sweete waters

Waters of Jordane bearyng yll sauored claye the
horrible example wherof shall remaine cuur in re-
membrance to them that come after / had the inha-
bitaçes vitterly gyuen to ryot and lechery / but yet
we rede nat that any of them was so wicked / that
he wolde blasphemie god / curse and threten hym
and yet they were all destroyed by rayne myngled
with brimestone. O thyng horrible / there be folide
amoge Christe people / that dare do / that Lucifer
durst nat / that Somoza durst nat : whiche also to
so many abominable dedes ioyne blasphemynge.
I se you most dere bretherne treble at rehersyng
of these thynges / and no meruayle : I my selfe als
so rehersyng them quyuet & shake bothe body and
soule. Neuer thelesse we purpose nat onely in this
sermo to declare howe great a synne dispeire of for
gyuenes is / but also to shewe howe exceedyng great
þ mercy of god is / whiche to preye we haue this
day entreprised : the whiche also spareth suche fol-
kes / and gyueth them space to repente & amende.
And pauenture we stande in our owne conceyt / by
cause amonge vs the examples of crimes / þ I re-
hersed nowe / be seldom seen : but what matter
maketh it / if the tonge soudeth no blasphemynge
whan of many þ holle lyfe speketh no other thyng
but blasphemynge agaynst god : The glouettos for
god worshyp they / bealy / who continually by right
& wrōge gape to hepe riches to gether / whiche by
murther / treason / poisonynge / & enchanting stalke vp
to honours / whiche by tyranyp opresse pooze people /
whiche to haue al thing to their m̄ de kēdel al the
worlde

Woulde to warre: nor persecutyng in these great i-
uris haue no shame nor repētance/but wā shames
les couurance lyke a comon womā/reioyse yea in
thynges most mischiefull/skornynge & mockyng
the good lyuers: Do nat þ captiues by those dedes
saye: There is no god, goddis behestis ben false,
þ thretyngeis of god be bayne / the worde of god
is a lyer, yeldyng the iopes of heuen to them that
mourne here/that thyſt and hūger Justice / that
be meke/that suffre pſecution / that for iuſtice ben
With hylle wordes rebuked: What can be more as-
hominable than this blasphemynge: And yet if a-
ny thynge can be worse than that, whiche is most
worse, disperſe is worse than the holle synkyng
multitude of other synnes. The wicked mā ſeyng
me might do what thynge he wold vnpunished/he
was proude of his proſperite & ſayd in his harte:
There is no god, and there is no knowlege aboue,
god careth nat for mortal folkes busynes. And aſ
he is leſſe iniurious agaynst a mā, þ belueuth nat
he is / thā he that beleueth hym to be cruel or false:
So lyke wypſe they bene leſſe wycked that bitterly
ſay there is no god, than they that beleue he is vn-
mercifull/takyng away that vertue fro hym / wi-
thout whiche kynges be nat kynges but tyraſtes.
But who ſo euer caſteth hope of forgyuenes aſide
& rollerth hym ſelſe downe in to the hurlepyt of diſ-
perſe / he doth nat onely beleue þ god is nat almy-
ghty / ſuppoſyng ſome ſyn ſo horrible þ he can nat
forgyue: but alſo maketh hym a lyer. He promy-
ſeth by the prophet / that he wyl incontinent cleane
forget

forgette all maner synnes, assone as the synnet be
waylethe them. Contrary wylle, they that folowe
Cain say: My synne is greater than that I may
deserue forgyuenesse. What sayste, thou wycked
wretche? If god ouer come with the greacnesse of
thy synne maye nat forgyue the, thou pluckest frō
hym his powd̄r almyghtye: if he wyll nat do that
he may, he is a lyer and false, þ wyl nat pſourme
that he so many tymes promyſed by þ prophetes
mouthes. Hit is infinite, what so euer is in god.
But.iii. speciall thynges be in hym, most high po-
wer, most high wyldeome, & most high goodnes.
And al be it þ power is wont to be ascribed to þ fa-
ther as his ppre, wyldeome to the sonne, goodnes
to þ holy gost: yet there is none of these thynges,
but it is egally cōmon to all th̄e pſons. His highe
power he shewed, whan he created these marue-
lous warkes of the worlde only with a becke, of þ
whiche there is no part, but it is ful of miracle, þe
the very pſmers and spyders crye out, shewynge
the great power of theyr maker. Agayne whā he
deuyded the wawes of þ red see: whan he restray-
ned the streme of Jordane, & made theruer pas-
sable for a fote man: whan whyle Josue foughte,
he made the sonne and moone stynce theyr course:
Whā with touchyng he healed lepers: & w̄ a word
reyſed dead men to lyfe, he shewed hym ſelue lord
of nature. And whan he with egall wyldeome cō-
ſerueth and gouerneth thſe thynges, whiche he
by his power þ can nat be declarid hath made, he
sheweth hym ſelue to be no leſſe wile thā almighty.

All be it that his goodnes every where shineth / as
that same creatiō of angels and this wōrldē was
a poynt of high goodnes / whā he to highe felicite /
that he hath of him selfe / lacketh nothīg / ȳ might
be added / yet he made mākynde prop̄erly to then-
tent / that there in specially he myghte exp̄esse the
greatnes of his goodnes and mercy / for in that be-
halfe god wolde nat alonly be more louyngē to vs /
but also more marueylous. They marueyle some
tyme at a kynges power and myghte / that hate or
haue enuy at hym. But gentylnes and lyberalite
is loued / yea of them that haue no nede / that is to
say / throughē consyderation of humayne chance :
wher by it may hap any what euer he be / to haue
nede. But there is no mā / noz hath ben / noz shal be
but ȳ he nedeth the mercy of god. Whan / as wyt-
nesseth the olde testament / neyther the sterres be-
clere in ȳ syght of god / and in his angels he soude
wickednes. And Paule cryethe to the Romayns :
There is no distinction / all haue synned / and nede
the glorie of god / that euery mouthe may be stop-
ped / and all the wōrldē be made subiecte to god.

Nowe let is here howe well with hym agreeeth ȳ
mystical synger / whiche with a lusty spirite exhort-
eth all good folkes / ȳ they with a spirituall harpe
with a sautry of x. strynges / with a newe songe / &
with great shouttyngē / shulde celeb̄ate the glorie
of god / sayenge : Our lordē loueth mercy and iuge-
ment / all the erthe is full of our lordes mercy.
One only is made mencion of iugement / but mers-
ey is twyse rehersed with this commendacion / that
therof

therof þerthe is full. I myght boldly adde this,
stayeng me by the auctorite of Job and þe apostle:
That nat only þerthe is full of our lordes mercy,
but also heuen and helle. What syngeth the xxxv.
psalme: O lordē thy mercy is in heuen, and thy
trouth recheth to the cloudes. They in helle pceis
ued the mercy of our lordē whan he brake the gas-
tes of darknes & broughte out the prisoners in to
the heuenly kyngdome. If one wold consydere the
warkes of god, whiche after the mysticall discus-
syng of Moyses, he made pset in þe fyfth. vi. dayes,
he shulde greatly maruayle at his power and ins-
essable wysedome / yea and crye out in the boyce
of all the churche: pseni sunt celi et terra. ac. The he-
uenys and erth be ful of thy glory. Nor he ne coude
absteine hym selfe / but brast out in the hys ne of the
thre children: Benedicte omnia opera domini. ac. Blesse ye
al the warkes of our lordē / preye and leape vp for
joy in hym euermore. What so euer is created in þe
heuenys / what so euer aboue the heuenys / what so e-
uer in erthe / what so euer vnder the erth / what so
euer in the water / what so euer in the ayre / sheweth
opely with boyce continuall the glory of our lordē.
But what sayth the psalme. Cxliii: Our lordē is
piteous and mercifull / pacient & moche mercifull.
Our lordē is swete to all / and his mercifull pitees
passen all his warkes. Ergo somethinge there is
more marueilous / than to haue made the heuenys /
with so many bryghte sterres / to haue created the
erthe with so many kyndes of beastis / of trees / &
variablenes of all thynges / to haue created so ma-

ny cōpanyes of angelycall myndes. Who durst be
so holde to affyrmē hit/excepte the prophet shewed
playnely / that the mettyses of our lorde passe the
glory of all his other warkes : And yet he shal nat
dout it to be true / who so euer with a religiōus cu-
riosite will cōsider howe moche more maruelously
he redēmed than created man. Is it nat more wo-
derfull god to be made man / than the angels to be
created of god : Is it nat more marueile / that god
wrapped in a babis clothes / shuld wayle / and cry /
in the cratche or rackinge / thā to reigne in þ heuēs / þ
he made : Here þ āgels / as thynge of greatest wo-
der syngē glory to god in the mooste high heuenny
māsions. They se the lowlyest humilitē / & knowe
the most excellent highnes. All the cōsayne of re-
demynge mankynde / Christis lyfe / Christis tea-
chyngē / Christis miracles / afflictio / crucifieng / re-
surrection / aperyng / ascention / the sendyng of the
holy goste / by a fewe sely poore idote mē ennewed
the worlde : this cōsayne I say / is it nat on euery
syde full of miracles / yea that the very āgels cun-
nat serche out : Wycked sp̄rites se and vnderstāde
the reason of the worlde's creacion / but the coun-
sayne of the worlde's restorynge was hyd fr̄ them :
and in this poynt crafte disceyued crafte / the crafte
of mercy begyled the crafte of malice. The creatiō
of þ worlde was the warke of puissance / þ worlde
so restored was þ warke of mercy. Thendis of the
crosse saythe Abacuc / in his handes / there is his
strength hyd. What is more byle than the crosse :
What is weaker thā the crucified : Yet vndet that
weakenes

weakenes/excedyng power of diuyne mercy laye
hyd/that brake/ouer came/and clene destroyed all
the tyranyn of the dyuell. The same prophet whan
he had eares erudice/whan he had eies very clere
by saythe/he herde the holle stame of þ woldē on
euery parte shewe the great myght of god/and he
was afraiſde: he considered his warkes/and was
amased. And yet as though in all these thyngis þ
great myght of god was nat playn inough/he ad-
ded/that shulde ouercome all these warkes: In þ
myddes of two beastis thou shalt be knowen. In
the meare of the olde & newe testamēt/he become
man/opened playnely that most bashefull miracle
of his mercy. Undouted hit is þ the prophet soone
after addeth: Whan thou woldest be angry/thou
shalte remēbre thy mercy. Of them that do thyng-
ges wonderfull/we be wont to say: In those he os-
uercame al/i this he ouercame hym selfe. Of god
some thyng lyke may well be sayd: God is incom-
parable in all his dedes/& can nat be folowed/ In
mercy he exceedeth hym selfe. Holy scripture extol-
leth no vertue in god so moche as mercy/whiche
some tyme calleth it great/some tyme ouermoche/
and somtyme augmenteth the plentifull abūdāce
therof by nombre of multitude. Kynge Dauid the
prophet in the same place/cōplecteth þ largenesse
and multitude of diuyne nercy: Misere mei deus
secūdi. &c. O god haue mercy on me after thy great
mercy/and after þ multitude of thy mercyes do as
way my wickednes. Where is great misery/there
is neve of great mercy. If ye cōſidre how horſible

the synne of Dauid was / ye knowe the largenesse
of mercy: If ye caste howe many maner wylle he
offended in one trespass / ye maye se the multitude
of his mercies. An exceeding great offence is never
commynched alone / a faute draweth a faute / as one
lynke doth an other in a cheyne. Fyrst he ioyned to
gether two most deedly synnes / manslaughter and
aduoutry: eche of hem was more greuous in the
kyng: whose office is to punysshe other that so of-
fende. For the more pryncis do amys vnpunysshed
amonge men / the more they offend god. He bare
a sworde to punysshe manslaughter / and he hym
selfe commynched manslaughter. By hym women ta-
ke in aduoutry were delivered to be stoned to deth /
and he hym selfe compelled to do aduoutry. He al-
so peculerly augmented the same aduoutry / that
whan he had flockes of wyues and concubyns at
home / yet nat so nede but so wātones he coueted
another mans wyfe / þ he wolde seme delite rather i-
rauysshyng thā in simple fornication. For he offe-
dethe nat so moche / that nede constraineth to steale
somewhat from the riche man / as he that hath his
house plentifully stouffed / & taketh his gowne frō
hym / that hath no mo to his backe. This cruel of-
fence Nathan þ prophet dyd obiect agaynst hym vns-
der þ parabol of the ryche thefe and poore mans
bed. Nowe no kynde of manslaughter is more cru-
ell / than that þ is nat by chance or sodayne mouyng
of þ mynde / but by a dryft before driven / waiyng
conuenient tyme / is commynched. Urias had noþyng
deserued / the kyng he knewe hym ryght trusty / and
he as

he abused the same trustynes of the man to his dis-
tractiō. He wolde in no wise ētre within his owne
house to lye with his wyfe, bycause p̄ arke of god
was lyenge in the tentes, and Joab capptayne of
the warre with the people, slept vpon the grounde,
and al that great worthines of the man coude nat
turne the kynges mynde from the iuell dede. The
moro we after he had hym to supper, & made hym
drōke, sek̄g occasion to distroy him, if he through
dronkēnes shuld hap to speke ought vndiscreately.
& yet Urias bēg drōke wold nat come i his house
to take his pleasure with his wyfe. An other gyle
was added, wherby the strōge & trusty warriour
muste perisshe. A lettre of murther to hym suspe-
ctyng no suchethyng was delyuered: for p̄ kyng
knewe his faythfulnes so perfecte, that he had no
dout he wolde open and rede it. In the offence of
manslaughter he made Joab the capitayne part-
ner, lyke as he had Bersabee of adiuoutrye. And
Urias perished nat alone, but to couer p̄ gyle, ma-
ny were broughte in to the same daunger: a great
nombre of people was set in the open shot of theyr
ennemyes, to thende one innocēt myght be kylde,
to gyue place to the kynges foule bodily pleasure.
Therefore in one linne how many are the offences?
If hit were one only synne, and excedyng great,
hit nedeth great mercy. Nowe Dauid seynge his
syn so manyfolde & dyuers, he calleth on the mul-
titude of mercies. But howe largely the mercy of
god is opened, p. xxxv. psalme declarereth, sayenge:
O good lordē thou haſt sauſ men and beaſtis, like

As thou haste multiplied thy mercy. God saueth
nat only man/but also he bouchesafeth for manes
whiche to sauue bestis. Againe in an other place how
reioyseth the prophetties spirite / whan he saythe:
I wyll syng the mercies of god perpetually. And
therfore in the heuens þ mercy of god is worshipt
& honoured like as sayth another psalme: Know
lege your selfe to god bycause he is good / bycause
his mercy is in al woldes. The preising of þ mer-
cy of god semed to haue ende / after the ende of all
wretchednes came / except the same felicite þ good
folkes haue in heuen / were the gyft of mercy / and
the punishment of the wicked tempered with the
great mercy of god. But what shall we say / whan
all the lyfe with a thousande syns / and all the syns
þþng see of vices is corrupted: Truly we must cry
with Asaph: O lord remeber nat our olde iniqui-
ties / but let thy mercy preuent vs quickly / for we
be made ouer poore. Againe in an other place: Ma-
ny be thy mercyes lord / after thy pleasant speche
quicken me. Agayne in an other place David / as
he cōplained w god / crieth out: Where be thy olde
mercyes good lord? Agayne in the psalme. Cvi.
Let the mercies of our lord be cōfessed / & his mar-
wyles of the sonds of men: Whiche verse as enter-
lyned is oft repeated i þ same psalme. In þ psalme
also that goeth nexte before: And he gaue vs vnto
his mercies in the syght of all that toke them. He
had mercies / because he had rehersed many wyc-
ked dedes / with whiche he prouoked the anger of
god. And David on all partis oppressed with plis /
sayth

sayth: It is better that I fall in the hādes of our
lorde: for manifold are his merices, than in to the
handes of men. As in one offence often times are
in any synnes, so lyke wise in one mercy many mer-
cies are conteyned. Ones he redemed mankynd,
but here in howe manifolde are the merices: Whi-
che Esaias beholdynge with the eie of fayth spe-
keth thus in the persone of god, promysyng our
saviour Iesus: And I wyll make with you a co-
uenant euerlastyng, the faythfull merices of Das-
uid. In a lyke figure god being appeased speketh
in the prophet Hieromie: And I wyll gyue you
merices, and shall haue pite vpon you. For many
grouous synnes, many merces are promysed.
Lyke wyse after many afflictions, god hauyng
pyte of his people speketh thus in the prophet Isa-
acie: I wyll retourne to Hierusalem in merices,
and my house shall be buylded. But whyp reherse
we those thynges, out of bookes of the olde testa-
ment, in whiche so ofte tymes the name of merices
is encouered: And yet some heretykes beleue that
þ same lawe procedeth of a iuste and nat of a good
god, whan it souneth welnere nothyng elles than
the merices of our lorde. Howe moche lesse is it to
be maruailed, if Paule tha postle in the. ii. pistle to
the Thessal. accordyng to the prophettis wordes
writeth in this wyse: Blessed be god and fater of
our lorde Iesu Christe fater of merces, & lorde
of al cōsolaciō, whiche cōforteth vs in al our tribu-
lacion. The apostle somwhat addeth to mercy, for
it is a poynþ of mercy to ydone offence done: here
D whiche

whiche is moche more / god of a reueger is made
a conforter. These thynges we haue repeted of the
holy scripture to thentent that we by that sygure
of spekyng myght vnderstande the signified exces-
dyng and vnspekeable mercy of god towarde eues
ry body, and in all yns. The same is shewed by an
other figure / whiche is eyther anadiplosis, that in
latin one may calle Eoduplicatio, or els nerest to Ana-
diplosis. For as the Hebrewes call that good good,
that they reken to be excedyng good / and yll yll y
is excedyng yll: so likewise in holy scripture god is
ofte called pitefull and mercifull / for the excedyng
gretenes of his mercy. So y rede in the psalme
Cxlvi. Our lord is pitefull and merciful / and as
though that also were a small thyng / he addeth:
Patient and moche merciful. Agayne in an other
psalme: Our pitefull & mercifull lord hath made
remembrance of his marueiles. Lykewyse in Jobel.
Rente your hartes and nat your clothes / for our
lord god is pitefull and mercifull, and sorowynge
for malices. And in the prophet Jeremie: Ther-
fore my bowelles haue ben troubled vpon hym /
I piteyng shall haue mercy on them / saythe our
lord. What is piteyng to haue mercy / but to haue
mercy out of mealure: To this poynt pteyneth /
that lythe it is infinice / what so euer is in god: yet
it that amoge men sowneth vnto vice / holy writte
semeth to ascribe vnto hym / certeyne ouer moche
and vnmoderate mercy. I wolde your goodnessse
shulde so take this sayeng / as ys waded nothynge
to be in god that sowneth to any vice / shuld vnder-
stande

stande that vnder þ figure the holy scripture sub-
mytting it selfe to maners pceyuyng, signyfyceth a
marueilous & an icredible excesse of diuine mercy.
Whiche chynge þ I may more plainly speake & ye
more pfectly pceyue, cosydre this in your mynde.
¶ If a kyng shulde stablyshe rigorous lawes on a
mankyller, & after he had commyced manslaughter
ones wolde pdone hym, may hap it shuld be ascri-
ued to his clemency. But & he pdone hym þ had
done þ mischcuous dede, x. tymes or more, wolde
nat euery body creue out: The kinges clemency is ou-
uer moche, þ ouerthoweth þ strength of þ lawes,
& puoketh þ lewde plones to do wickedly for lacke
of punishment: Also a father that ones or twise for-
gyueth his son for spendyng his money lewdly as
way, may hap shalbe called easly and mylde. If þ
same father often tymes gyue his sonne money, so
lewdly wastynge hit, wyl nat euery body saye: He
is to easly, and by his hyndnes marreth his sonne:
And moche more souchly hit myght be sayd, if he
dyd so to his servant. More ouer, if an husbande
shuld take in worth, if his wyfe were take ones in
auoutry, vndouted euery body wolde marueyle to
fynde so mcke an husbande. But & þ woma soone
after breke her wedlocke, & is take i auoutry nowe
with one nowe with an other, if he thā toke her to
þm agayne, wolde nat all the people say he were
a starke sole, orclis his wiues baude: But god þ is
our kyng, our father, our lord, our spouse, excus-
eth no kynde of syn, he prescribeth no nobre of syn-
nyng, as ofte as we amede he releaseth our peine:

whiche his everlastynge lawe thretneth he recey-
ueth vs into his household he leadeth vs i to the
chābre of his charite & he nat onely receyuetb vs
but also forgyueth all our offēces. The shēpe that
was lost he carieth home on his shulders to þ cote
agayne: he stereth the congregacion of holy folke
to reioyce to gether he meteth the riottous childe
returnyng home frō far cuntry he offereth hym
a fayre gowne and a ryng he comandeth to kylle
a goodly calfe. What thyng els signifieth all this/
but unmoderate & (if I may so saye) ouermuche
mercy of god. But nowe it semeth lesse marueile/
if a man forgyue a man offēdyng that also other
while doth offēce hym selfe likewise or may offēd/
if a kyng ydone hym / þ somtyme dyd hym good
profitable seruice: or if the father forgyue his son/
whose couersaciō he feleth doth ease his olde age:
if a mayster forgyue is seruanc / by whose labourt
he partly lyueth: if the hushāde forgyue his wyfe
taken in auoutric with whom other while he lea-
deth his life pleasantly. Amōge men he that some
time ydonech dredeth hym that he forgiueth and
other while can nat auēge hym selfe / if he wolde.
But god that hath nedes of no man / that may with
a becke distroy vs if he wold so often tymes of vs
despised / forlakē & denied: suffceth / calleth / recey-
ueth / and embraseth vs. As no loue is more feruēt
nor strayter conibynge than betwene man and
wyfe: so lyke wyse no anget is harder to appease
than it þ cyseth by breakyng of wedlocke. And yet
here wherout mylde lordē saythe by the prophet

Esaias

Esaias to his spouse an auoutrice defyled with so
many auoutries: It is comonly sayd, if a man for
sake his wyfe, and she departed frō hym weddeth
an other man, shall he retourne to her any more?
Shall nat þ wonā be poluted and defiled? Truly
thou committest fornication with many louers, and
þst returne to me (saith our lord) & I wyl receiue
the. I maried man wyl nat take his wyfe agayne,
whom parauenture he forsoke for a small faute or
cause, if she after þ deuorce be wedded to another
man. For wedlockis loue can nat suffice þ company of
an other man. But yet god doth nat disdayne his
spouse, for whom he suffered dethe, whiche for him
selfe he purified with his bloud, þ so ofte wylfully
runneth away, and abandoneþ her selfe to so ma-
ny vncleane wyghtis, if she wyll returne agayne.
And it is no marueil, if he haue ouermuche mer-
cy, þ hath ouermuche charite towarde vs. Paule
blesseth nat to wyte thus to the Ephesiens: We
were by nature the children of anger, lyke as the
other were, but god that is riche in mercy, for his
ouermuche charite, that he loued vs with, & whā
we were dediſyns, he quickened vs all together
in Christe. Iohan in his gospell expreſſeth more
playnly þ ouermuche charite of þ facher towarde
vs. God, sayth he, loued so the worlde, þ he wolde
gyue his onely begotten son, that who so euer bele-
ueth in hym shal nat perishe, but haue euerlastyng
lyfe, with whom Paule agreeþ tunably, wryting
to þ Romayns: Whiche also spared nat his owne
son, but deliuered hym for vs all: howe, gaue he
nat vs

nat vs all thynges with hym: If this great charite, this so great mercy, shulde be conferr'd to all humayn charite & mercy, & to our merites, wolde hit nat well semme unmoderate: But trewly it shall appere moche more veritable, if we consider what he is, that so loueth vs, & so sheweth his mercy on vs, & what we be, that god bouchesafeth so great honour. Let eche loke on him selfe, after the name in baptisme gyuen, after **S**atanas forsaken with his pompis, howe oft he forsaketh the sacrament and yeldeth hym to thennemy of his spouse, howe oft after absoluciō of his synnis received of þ prest he slydeth into moche grecuous offences, ye how oft þ same day he falleth in to them, that he aboredit: Lette no body most dcre b̄retherne dissemble with hym selfe, who so euer stealeth or comitteth auous cry, who so euer ēuieth or skandaleth his brother, who so euer couceth wordly honořs, leaueth his spouse Christe, turneth away from his father, forsaketh his king, and fleeth away far fro his lordes. But pauenture we shall haue a littell after a more conuenient place to speke of these thynges.

Flowe to thende ye may more fully understand, howe largely the exceeding mercy of god spredeth, ye must understande, þ in holy writte the cleapyng of mercy signifieth somtyme liberalyte, somtyme grace preuētyng, somtyme auāsyng, other while cōfortyng, agaynſ other wher healynge, but very oft forgyvynge, or els also punyfhyng. Soz surely after my mynde, that þ our lord speketh in Luke, Be mercifull like as your fader is mercifull, þer
ſeynet

teyneth specially to liberalite. For pfecte liberalite
is, if one do good to his enemes. Mattheus saith
hit more playnly in a lyke sayeng of our lorde: Be
ye (sayth he) pfecte lyke as your father celestiall is
perfect, that maketh his son to shyne on good and
yll, and sendeth rayne to iuste and vniuste. But be
cause we haue nothynge that we ne receyued stely
of god, what euer we maye or be, what so euer we
possesse, it is the mercy of god. Yea that he created
angels, and this worlde, is the mercy of god. If
he had created hit for hym selfe, the power or wises
dome myghte be preyed. Nowe, saynge he hath
wroughte all these thynges for vs, knowe nat we
the excedyng great mercy of god? for whom mos
uen y ccelstiall bodies aboue: for whom shyneth
the sonne by daye, The moone and the sterres by
nyght, but for mā: for whose profit were all these
thynges wrought, whā they were nothynge: for
whom make the hangyng cloudes shadowe, and
moyst the feldes: for whom bloweth the wynde:
for whom runne the ryuers, the welles sprynges,
the see ebbe and flowe, the pondis stāde stylle: for
whom engendreth the pletifull erthe so many bea
stis, and bryngeth forthe so moche ryches, but for
man: for he subdued euery thyng unto man, he
wold man shulde onely be subiect to hym: lyke as
wytnesseth Paule wryting to the Corinthies. All
thynges be yours, but ye be of Christe, & Christe
is of god. And it that Moises sheweth in Genesis
the. viii. psalmie repeateth, marueylyng at y good
nes of god, that of his mercy hath gyuen to man

so many benefites. What is man saythe he · that
thou remembrest hym / or the sonne of man / that
thou visest hym: Thou hast made hym lytell
lesse thā angels / thou hast crowned hym with glo-
ry and honout / and hast set hym aboue þ warkes
of thy handes. Thou hast subdued all vnder his
feet. Shepe and open cuerchone / peas and moxe bea-
stes of the feld / byrdes of the ayre / and fyshes of
the see. I wyll say yet that is higher: We be boūd
to the mercy of god for the heuenly angels. Beleue
nat my woorde / without Paule teache it playnly /
writynge to the Hebrewes / and speking of angels.
We nat saythe he / all spirates seruantes in seruice
sent for theyr sake / that receyue the inheritance of
saluacion: And bothe in þ olde and newe testamēt
we oftē rede þ by ministracion of angels þ hungry
were refreshed / prisoners deliuered / coustres ouer-
rone / þ good folke cōforted with ioyfull tpynges.
Moze ouer our lordē hym selfe in the gospel sayth:
Theyr angels beholde alway the face of þ fater,
that is in heuen. What is moxe marueilous than
this wortyhnes / angels gyuen to sely men as go-
uernours to childdren: Therfore what so euer thou
hast man / truely thou hast all thinges while thou
remaynest in Christe / thou shuldest reken to haue
it al of his mercy. Otherwile Paule wyll stampe
& crie out vpon the: What hast inā that thou hast
nat receyued: And if thou hast receyued it / why
magnifiest thy selfe / as þ dyddeſt nat receyue hit:
Farther / what yuell so euer thou seeſt in other / as
knowlege the mercy of god þeuētynge þ: Wherof

Paupd

Dauid nat in one place sayth: And his metry shal
preuēt me. Thou art no bastarde borne, nor lame,
nor blynde, thou art nat poore, nor dulwicke, like
as many be borne, gyue thakes to þ mercy of god
preuētynge the. What so euer hurtes happē to an
other mā myght haue chanced to the, nere that þ
metry of god had defended the. Agayne, thou art
none aduouter, no false forsweret, no mankyller,
no churche robber, lyke as (alas) ouer many be, a
knowlege the mercy of god, for thou shuldest haue
ben, and the mercy of god had nat keptē the.

A man on a tymē þ coude good skele in phisnomy
iuged Socrates to his disciples, to be a man desis-
tous of ryot, & ouermuche gauen to lechery, they
knowyng theyr maisters incredible teperāce, þtly
laughed him to scorne, and partly disdained hym.
Socrates blamed them & praysed hym, sayenge,
He hath diuined truly, all this had I ben, if phys-
iosophie had nat taught me teperāce. But moche
more southly þ right holy man Francis ascriueth
hunto diuine mercy, that Socrates yeldeth to phis-
iosophie. Soz on a tymē whā his felowe, of hym com-
manded so to do, had reviled hym with what so e-
uer wordes a mischeuous captiue is wont to be re-
buked, calling hym churche robber, mankyller,
backebiter, poller, & poysoner, he toke it most paci-
ently, and bewayled hym selfe þ he was suchē one.

Another tymē whan his felowe asked hym whā
he expelled hym to make so many lies vpon an in-
noſet, for none of al these thynges were thām he an-
swered: Thou dost nat lye, for al these had I ben,

þe art moche more mere þ þ mercy of god kept his
servant fro those synnes. And þ mercy of god doth
not only preuent & prouoke vs to goodnes, but also
þo helpeth vs entprisynge, accompanieth vs going
forth, and in conclusion gyueth vs puissance, þ we
may pforme that mannes strengthes coude nat
do. He semeth the apostle Paule signifieth such
a maner of mercy in many places, but specially
in gretynge, besechynge grace and peace. In pi-
stis to Timotheus also he addeth mercy. And cer-
tes without prejudice of a better sentence, if any
hauie it to shewe, I thynke grace pteyneth to cal-
lyng of vs, for we be called by fayth, þ is beleue.
This fayth is the free gyfte of god, and therfore
they to whom it happeneth, are for it bounde to the di-
uine mercy. Mercy pteyneth to dyuers gyftes dis-
tributed to ech after the measure of his faythe.
þeace longeth to the innocencie of all the lyfe, with-
out whiche frefdship with god can nat be had, nor
true concorde without bretcherne. Verly as oft as
we be deliuered fro iuels that we be greued with,
we shulde nat repute it to the sterres, to fortune,
nor to our prudencie, but we ought to ascriue it al to
þ mercy of god. No man tangled in the bondes of
syn can be deliuered, excepte he be holpe by diuine
mercy. This teacheth the psalme. Cxxix. for our
lorde hath great mercy, and in hym is plentyfull
redemption, and he wyl redeeme Israel fro all his
quinges therof. Farther, that the mercy of god doth
þuerech vs also fro bodily harmes, Paule declas-
keth writing to the Philippes: Epaphroditus
was

Was sickē yea nere deed: but god saythe he pitied
hym nat only hym/but also me/lest I shuld haue
had sorowe vpon sorowe. For there is no difference
but wene mercē helppneg and cōfortynge/saue that
we be holpe/whā p yuclē be takē awāy p greued
vs/but mercē cōforting is at hande/as oft as in p
myddes of afflictions it tempereth the grefe of ad
uersite with mynglyng of ioyfull th̄ges/causing
frute with repetition/as Paule sayth/wherby we
may susteyne hit. And the same yuclē ofte tymes
are sente of god pitcyng/wherby we may either
purge out yl dedes comyted/or clē withdrawe vs
that we commytre no nō/oꝝ to myniste vs mat
ter to exercise vertue. In suchē wylē Abrahā was
tempted/so Job was exercised in dyuers troublē/
so who so euer lyued well in Iesu Christē/were in
this woldē proued by dyuers afflictions/as golde
is by the fyre. Where be they that murmur as
gaynst god/as oft as to them happeneth bodily sickē
nes/oꝝ deth of theyr children or wylē/oꝝ as ofte as
they haue losse of householde stouffe/oꝝ as ofte as
theyr felde frutes fayle/nat understandyng these
to be the most certeyn tokens of god pitcyng vs:
Let vs rather here what Solomō monisheth vs:
My sonns/caste nat awaye the teatchynge of our
lorde/noꝝ leaue hym nat/whan he correcteth the:
For hym p our lorde loueth he correcteth: and deli
teth in him as a father in his childe. Paule to the
Hebreus repeteth this sentence/changynge som
what the wordes. for whom our lorde loueth he
chastiseth: he scourgeth for sothe every childe that

he admitteth. Therfore mooste welbeloued bres
theris as oft as y stome of aduersite assaileth you
continuer in discipline as Paule consaileth knowyng
yng y god offret hym unto you as unto childre
here the vopce of the father mercifullly correctyng
his children in y psalme. lxxxviii. If they violate
my iustis and kepe nat my comandementes I
wyll vise theyn iniquites by the rodde and their
synnes by beatynge. But I wyll nat throwe my
mercy fro hym nor I wyll nat hurt in my trouth.
And lyke wyse Paule threatneth the chyldren that
he loueth sayeng: What wolde ye shal I come to
you by the rodde or in the spirite of hyndnes and
mekenes. But the same Paule saythe: What ne
deth me to iuge of them y be without? No boyce
is more bytter and sharpe unto chyldren than to
here theyn fater saye: Do what ye wyll I care
nat. So thus sayth he that myndeth to disherite.
Durcely this faterly hyndnes is sharper than a
ny chydynge. Therfore as sufferance is cruell so
correction is mercifull. The iuste man saythe: He
shal correct me in his mercy and shal rebuke me
but the oyle of the synnet shall nat greece my heed.
Paulus Emilius the Romayn capitayn whiche
being prosperous in all his dedes diuined y somme
greate iuel was comynge. And Polycrates y tyra
of Samiens went alway about to redeme y enuy
of fortune, slaterynge with losse of a ring most pre
cious. Howe moche more ought we dredre lyuyng
wickedly lest the iuste vengeance of god hange o
uer vs whan the prosperite of temporall goodes
flatter

slater vs longe. for whan god in the prophecies
wyll expresse his vngreaseable anger, he chreteth
to take away his rodde from them/ and that by af-
flictions he wyl nat redresse their sinnes. God kepe
vs most dere bretherne from suche felicite. But ra-
ther, if þ mercy of our father vouchesafe vs oughe
of welch, we must thake hym, & be carefull lest we
any wher shulde abuse his liberalite. And if ad-
uersite greue vs, we shuld no lesse thankynge hym
submit vs holly to his arbitremet. To haue helth
of body, thou submittest the to the phisician a man,
thou sufferest þ surgian to bynde, cut, and burne,
wylte nat submyt the to thy maker, lorde, father,
and sauour, that thou maist haue thy soule helth
everlastyng: Thou darst nat lympt to the leche,
thus and by this reason heale me: and shal we cos-
dicion with god, howe he shulde prouide for our sou-
les helthe: Paule the apostle suffred thangel of the
deuyl to assayle hym and gyue hym blowes, for so
it was expediet to retayne the gystes that he had
receyued. Whan I am weake saþt he, than am
I stronge. And he glorifieth gladly in his infirmit-
ies, that he myghte possesse the vertue of Christ
dwellynge in hym. What be we, that refuse this
mercy of god, by dyuers afflictions, as hit were
with bytter playsters, procurynge our helthe:

The comon people wha they se, one þ is descended
of high linage, hauing abundance of riches, helth of
body, & heaped in honours, are wont to say: Howe
moche is he bounde to god: Thus iuge they, that
esteme felicite in those thingis, þ be seen outward.

But he that examyneth the thyngē after the iuge-
mēt of god / shall fynde ofte tymes the lowe byrth,
poore / sickly / & y out cast amōge men more boūde
to þ mercy of god than these ioly felowes / that the
grosse multitude make h egall to goddis. He ape
to gether as moche of vnwelthynge as thou wylc,
touchyng þ woldē / yet if þ by these tēpōz el yuelg
redeme felicite cuerlasting / þ art abundātly happy.

Cnowe forgyvynge mercy / whiche also we cleape
Clemency / cuery mā knoweth / sauē he that thyn-
keth hym selfe gyfles fro all syn. But what sayth
chāpostle Johs: If we say we be without synne /
we be lyers / and therē is no trēuch in vs. And if þ
sterres be nat clere in þ lyghte of god / and if in his
angels he soude wickednes / if no creature be pure
in the spght of god / yea nat a childe of a day olde /
whiche of vs may gloriſie to haue a chaste harte.

Many ſeme rightous amōge men / before god no
man is iuste: but al our iuſtis / are as it were the
clothe of a womā defiled with þ menſtruous flise.
Paule pceyuet h howe the carnall lawe in his me-
bris ſtryuet h agaynt the lawe of the mynde / and
crieth out: I vnhappy creature / who ſhall deliuer
me from the body of this deſte: Job with a iuste
mans title honoured / is nat ſoude clene fautes by
the talkyngē of god. Also he the prophet Dauid
dredeth the iugement of god / nece that it were as
layed with moche mercy. Thou ſhuldest naclēre
good lordē ſayth he / in iugement with thy ſeruāt
for truely no lyuyng creature ſhalbe ſoude iuste in
þy ſpght. **C**nowe let eche of vs ente in to the
chamb̄e

chambre of his conscience / and consider howe ma-
ny wares / howe ofte / howe greuously he hath of-
fended god / yea with what sondry vices al our bes-
nefites are defiled : and so than he shal vnderstād
howe moche he is bounde to the excedynge great
mercy of god : that so paciently suffereth our fes-
blenes / that by so many occasions stereth vs to re-
pentance / that so swetely forgyueth all our offens-
ces / whan we leaue our wickednes. To al these I
wyl adde, that shal seeme to some nat very puable.

Whan god destroyeth y wycked lyuers / y come to
the hiest point of malice / and casteth them downe
in to helle / yet than he forgetteth nat his mercy.

He deliuereth y Hebrewes / diuidynge y wares
of the see / and dwoneth Pharao with his garde.
Mercy was on bothe sydes / helping toward his
people / purifying toward the kyng ful of despe-
rate malice / lest he shulde / heapping synnes vpon
synnes / purchase hym selfe more greuous peynes
in helle. The helping mercy was / that god by so
many plages stered hym to do penāce. And nowe
he / assailed with so many yuels / began to repent :
but after he repented hym selfe agayne of his hel-
thfull repentance / & layd: I knowe nat our lord /
nor I wyl nat let y people go. Nor yet he moued
with so great myracle ceassed nat to pursue them :
but blynded with anger / boldly entred in to y see /
God of his mercy oppressed his desperate malice /
that whan he woldē nat be healed / he shulde more
easly perishe. The lame ought to be demed of the
other examples of cructe / that be rehersed in bo-

kes of the olde testament / as of them that the fire
burned, the groude swallowed, þ sword destroyed,
the serpentes devoured. So in the gospels the ex-
amples of vengeance are fewe, but all of mercy.
It was an easy correction, that Clymas stryken
with sodayne blydnes, was taught nat to stryue
agaynst þ worde of the gospell. Paule deliuereſ a
fewe to Satanas in affliction of the fleshe, that þ
ſoule myght be ſaued at þ day of dome: and they
corrected with ſhamē, ſhulde turne to better frute.
There is no example more rigorous than of Ia-
nias and Saphitas, that by Peters correſtio fell
downe dead ſodenly, and yet it is vncerteyn wher-
ther theþ ſoules by dethe of the body are ſaued.
Finally the punishment that the damned ſoules
of yll lyuers ſuffre in helle, is leſſe thā they meri-
tis. And there be ſome, þ eſteſe the mercy of god
ſo great, þ they beſue that þ wicked ſpirites also
and dāned ſoules, ones after many ſeasons gone a-
bout, ſhall be received to grace. Though this op-
nion ſtayeth on a great auoz, yet it hath bē repro-
ued by þ perfect fathers of our ſayth: whiche onely
were herleſ for this entent, that we maye declare,
what an excedyng great opiniō we moſt highly le-
ued conceyued of the mercy of god: whiche nyght
a day were occupied in holy bokeſ, whiche ſyngē,
extolle, and magnifie welnere nothynge elles but
the mercy of god. ¶ Nowe if it be ſhewed ſuffici-
ently, what euer we be or haue touchyng goodnesſ,
that we be deſēded frō iuels depedyng, that we be
deſuereſ frō hurtes oppreſſyng, that in the myd-
des

des of tribulacions / refreshed with heuenly com-
fort, we abyde stronge & lusty, that by temporal af-
flictions we be eyther instructed to repentance / or
exercised to perfect vertue / that our syns done be nat
to vs imputed / wherinto so oft we slide / cometh al
of the mercy of god: that ye may more cleerly per-
ceyue the exceeding hvyght / breade / and depe[n]g
therof / I pray you that with me ye wyl a lytell be-
holde your selfe inwardly / fy[er]st in þ party through
whiche ye be most lothsome / & after in that wher-
þy pe excelle / lastely þe muste regarde the yis that
outwardly hange ouer and cōpasse you about / and
agayne to þ bounties / of whom the hope is to you
shewed. The contemplacion of all these thynges
wyl teche vs the largenes of diuine mercy / wher
of verily is neyther measure nor nombre.

If we beholde this small body the yppe or litel
house of our soule / vneth one may fynde any beast
more weaker / lothsome / ye or more wretched. If ye
enquere þ begynnyng / the fy[er]st of our kynde was
of claye. Nowe let euery man consider this / howe lit-
tel or nothyng is the great purposeng / what cuer
is of the humor / of whose cōielaciō the principles
of mankynde take begynnyng / whan as yec it is
hyd in the womans womb. Than howe far that
humor distateth from hipocras and deyntie mea-
tes / wherwith the childe nat borne is nourished. I
wyl nat reherse here þ flichines of makydys byreþ
only that pe haue ofte seen / call to mynde. What is
more wretched thā makydys byreþ / Howe longe
& howe perillous be þ panges of women traumas

lyng? What miserable wailynge? At last þ child
hit selfe crepyng forth soone from wepyng & way-
lyng begynneth the life. And where as Nature to
all other beastis as soone as they come forthe, gy-
ueth divers as coueringis or defenses shels/bars-
kes/chicke skyng/prickes/heares/bristels/quils/
fetheres/scales/flissis, & also other whyle defendeth
the stypes & trees from colde & hete with a double
barke: only mankynede naked, & on þ bare grounde
the day of his byrth she casteth out, forth with to
wepe and wayle, who wold nat iuge in this point
þe a chekyn crept out of the broken shell more hap-
py þā mākynede: fforþer/se howe he is swadled/
his mouth to theles, his tonge spechles, his eies
can nat suffice þ newe lyght, and sareth as it wold
entre the darknes of the mothers wōbe agayne/
that he lefte, þ mouldre quauereth longe, a roke a-
mōge al beastis of greatest weakenes, brefely all
the litel body is weake, in whiche is no membre þ
dorh his dewry. Most part of all other beastis as
soone as they be brought forth, emprise þ gyfces of
their nature. Some are swyft, as hōsles. Alsoone
as þ butterflie cometh out of the skyng & fleeth: It
is no sute wasseling with a leons whelpe. Alsoone
as fyshes be spauined they swymme: Tadpolles
tollen them selfe with great swyftnes before they
may be called or haue any shap of frogges: onely
what other thyng can mankynede do by course of
nature but wepe? Howe longe lerneth he to go:
Whan he hath lerned to go on, ii. feet, howe longe
must he lerne to speke: ye he can nat sede/oucept
he be

he be taught. Adde nowe þ many kyndes of sickenes / that vñeth can be rehersed / and specially þ newe / that it is harde to heale them / howe be it as
mōge the olde many be vncurable. Som take mā
kynde soone after the byþth / som also in the byþth /
as lepre / fallyg puel / wherby many dye or they be
gyn to lyue. And this whyle I speke nothyng of
them that be borne with many defautis of nature
& mysshapen. Nowe let eche cōsyder this by hym
selfe / what dōmages he hath suffred i youth / how
fugitiue youth is / howe carefull mans state / how
wretched / olde age / and so forth howe short þ holle
lyfe / though one hap to be olde / whiche yet chan-
ceth to very fewe. Who so euer of you is at manes
state / let hym recke the course of the life past / & cont
fro what sickenes / frō what great perils he is e-
scaped / & let hym thanke þ mercy of god. Verily I
wolde reken amōge bodily yuels as p̄ncipal / the
sedes of all maner vices faste rount in vs / howe
greatly to āger / to bodily pleasure / to riot / to ēup /
to ābicion / to couetousnes / to robbery / frō our mos-
thers wombe we be enclined / where all other beas-
tis lyuen lowably with in the desyres of nature.
What a labour is it to vs all to wastell with these
lauynges of olde Adā / to howe fewe lucky / The
soulc is ouer loded with the weyght of þ erthy bos-
dy / and whether it wyl or wyl nat / is drowned in
these thynges that it aloweth nat. Farther more
cōsydrie / what rout of yuels cnuiron vs without /
and ye shal fynde þ many mo perishe by chāce thā
sickenes. Howe many be destroyed by lyghenynge /

erth quakes / grounde openynges / lakes / floddes of
þ see and riuers / infectious aer / venom / wyld bea-
stis / fallynge of huge thinges / vñ phisicis : but no
way gteatter distruption than throught warres :

But all these myschewes thretten to distroye but
the body. Howe many dāgers hange ouer þ soule:
fro þ fleshe a housshould enemys / fro the wōlde nowe
flatteryng that it may strangle / nowe ragyng that
it may oppresse / fro wicked spiciles þ or yet whyle
transfigurē them selfe lyke angels of lyght. Who
dredeth nat of these þ multitude / powers / discēit /
malycē / and unsaciablie despīe to distroye : Howe
who amōge these yuels wold it nat nere flee / deth
certayne to echē / the day vncertayne / the rigorous-
nes of the heitē dome / the peynes of hell euerlas-
styng : I se you tremble at thonly remēbryng of

these so great myschewes / and no w̄onge : but the
more ye here of yuels and dāgers / the more ye be
bōude to the mercy of god / whiche amōge al these
þis nat onely desēdeth thōse that trust theron / but
also turneth all these thynges to vs in occasion of
more felicite. What so euer calamite we haue here
we may wyte it the syn of olde Adam : but for the
felicite in stede of calamite to vs velden more plēcis
fullp / we ought to thāke the newe Adam / that is
Christ Iesu of all creatures preyled þ wōld with-
out ende. Satanas expelled vs out of Paradyse /
Christe for therthly paradise opened vs the heuen-
ly kyngdome. The serpē drove vs to dyuers so-
lōnes of this life / Christ restored vs to ioyes euer
lasting of lytle immortall. Satanas by his gyle got

vs bodily deth / Christ by his mercy rewarded vs
lufe etnal to whom who so euer with a pure harte
yeldeth hym nedeth to dредe no kinde of enemis.
He ouercame the worlde / he vanquished all Satans
nas tyrany / he turned þ fleshe in to spirite. That
he ouercame is of his power: þ he ouer came for
vs is of his mercy. Let vs honour his mercifull
myght / and take fruicion of his myghtyfull mer-
cy. All thynges we may do by hym / that maketh
vs myghty / if we abide with hym: al thinges we
possesse by hym / i whom is al goodnes every where
vs defendyng / apdying / confortyng / & encresyng by
his mercy / lyke as the prophet sayth in þ psalme:
Mercy wyll enuiron them that trusste in our lorde.
To what great us are they subiect / that put their
trust in bodily gyftes / in riches / in chases / in hor-
ses / in worldly prudēce / in theyr merites & dedes:
But by what succours is þ iuste man out of care:
Truly sayth he / I trust in þ multitude of thy mer-
cy. And a lytell after: Lorde as with the buckler of
thy good wyll hast crowned vs. Whan ye here / Of
thy good wyll / ye vnderstāde þ hope of your owne
merites to be excluded. Where the streches of na-
ture fayle vs / where our merites for sake vs: there
mercy succouereth vs. The warriours shylde cou-
uer but one part of the body / the buckler of diuine
mercy dothe fensuely couer vs all aboue / aboue
agaynst the fyre darteres of wycked spirites / that
hange ouer vs fro the celestiens: beneth agaynst
the sleight of the serpent þ wayteth to attrap vs:
afore / lest thinges present greue vs: behynde / lest

thinges past euade vs agayne: on the right hāde
lest prosperite make vs insolent: on the lyfte hande
lest aduersite ouer thowte vs. Trustyng in this busi-
eler David crieth out: Our lord is my helper. I
wyll not dredre what a man can do to me. And in a
nother place: I wyll nat feare a thousande people
cōpassyng me about. But Paule the apostle cryeth
out yet more boldly writing to the Rōmayns: If
god be with vs sayth he/who shal be agaist vs:

That noble warrior armed hym with al þ har-
neis of the faith, whiche fortifieth vs nat by hope
of our warkes, but of diuine mercy. He be þg bold
on this armour, dyd nat only dispise grefe, hūger,
pouerte, peril, psecutio: but also the tygās sword,
threning to sle hym by and by. The humayn cru-
elnes may do nothing, wherethe mercy of god is
redy at hande to defende: yea this is stronger, he
dispised beside deth and lyfe, āgels, p̄ncipalites,
vertues, thinges present & to come, fortitude, alti-
tude, depth, & so forth, if any other creature were
in the heuēs, or in erth, or in helle. And this is he,
whiche knowing his weakenes calleth hym selfe an
erthe pot. We haue sayth he, this treasure in erthe
pottes. fro whens thā hath this britell erthe pot
so moche strength: By the grace of god sayth he,
I am it that I am. What is the grace of god but
þ mercy of god: Let vs gladly gloriſy with Paule
in our infirmites, that the vertue of Christe may
dwelle in vs: for so it is more expediet for vs, that
by contemplacion of our miseries, we maye gloriſie
the mercies of god. And yct the meane while, if it
lyke

lyke the beholde thy selfe thou man in that parte
that thou excellest the other beastis. For if thou es
teme thy selfe after the goodnes of the body, thou
seest thou art lower than many brute beastis / the
camels in greatness excede the, in swyftnes the ty-
gers / in strength the buls / in colour the swannes,
in apparayle peacockes / in helthines the fylches / ye
if we beleue the proverbe / welnere all beastes / in
quicke syght y beast lynx & egles / in smellyng gris-
pis, in lōge lyse hartis and crowes. And yet if one
cōsyd̄re y gyltes of the humayn body / he shal here
fyde wherin he may preyse y merc̄y of god. What
sagelite of the. v. wittis / what great cōformite of
mēb̄es / howe fēt instrumentes to dyuers us̄es:
But of those thinges also Lactantius a mā of sin-
guler eloquēce / cōpiled a boke / whiche he nameth
De opificio dei. To rede that boke wyl profit vs mo-
che, if we minde what goodnes is in the body, and
as hit all cometh from the mercy of god / to be ser-
uant lyke bonde to diuine obeylance. Other wyse
he that wyl gloriſie in bodily gyltes / shall by & by
here: All fleshe is heyn / and all gloriſie therof is as
the flower of heyn. Whyn arte proude thou dost and
as heys: Neþher in gyltes of the soule / in whiche
patte man is more marueilous / he hath oughte
that he may chalenge as his owne. He that made
the body / formed y soule / y body he made of slyne
and put in the soule with inspiyng of his mouth.
And therfore of the other beastes the soule & body
perishe to gether / ours is alþuc after the body / yl
þe receyue it agayne in the resurrection / pnyſed.

Nowe howe effectual a thyng the soule is, þ verþ
deth declarereth, which assone as she depreþ, there
lyþ the carkes vpprofitable: where is the hete,
where is the colouer, where is the mouyng, where
is the myght of all the wyttes? And yet while the
soule is holden fast tied to this so vnhappy sely bo-
dy, doyng no thyng but through the bodily instru-
mētes, whiche verþ oft let, þ she can nat put forþ the
þer natuue powre, howe maruelous is þ swiftnes
and profounde vnderstandinge of mans mynde.
What an exceeding treasure of remēbrance. What
is so hyd in þ secretes of nature, or i þ heuēs, or in
erthe, that mans wyt can nat marke, pceiue, and
discusse? It is a great thyng, that many by situa-
cion and mouyng of the sterres shewe what shall
fall many yeres to come: but it is more that by þ
thinges wrought, the euerlastyng power and god-
hood of the same worker is founde out, wyttes is
Paule: Howe moche is the swiftnes of mas wyt,
I howe short space, howe many thinges doth mas
wyt beholde at ones? But howe excedeth þ myght
of memory, that truly obserueth þ shaps of so ma-
ny thinges, & so many names of thynges compy-
ted to her by þ ministracion of the wyttes? I wyll
speke no thyng here of them, þ haue lerned so ma-
ny sciences so harde to knowe, & so many lāgages
& that that they lerned, they reteyne styl. Let him
that wyllof pou chynke, howe many folkes faces
& names he remēbrereth, howe many shaps of bea-
utis, trees, herbes, places, and of other inumera-
ble thynges he knoweth, and memorially cleapeth
them

them by name. The comon people calle these gystes
of nature/ whā i dede they be gystes of duine
mercy, whiche are departed to eche nat after our
merites/but after his benignite. Al these thinges
bicausē p̄ prodigal child abused to p̄ pleasure of hu-
man wyl/nat only it is nat withdrawē that was
gyuen/but by grace more abundant lyberalite of
gystes is added. By lawe he instructed vs/by his
sōle whom holle he gaue to vs/he taught vs the
secretes of god/by his spirite he enriched our soules
with dypers gystes/passyng mannes power.
He gyueth vnderstanding of mysticall scriptures/
that gyue lyght and comfort to vs in all yls/he gy-
ueth forknowlege of thynges to come/he gyueth
conges to speke sondry langages/to cōtempne bes-
nom/to heale sycknesse/to reple the deed/to con-
fonde noyful spirites/he gyueth power to ouercōe
hel gates/he graūterth vs to be mēbres of Christ/
childre of god/pteners of the kyngdome celestials/
that never shall haue ende. Here com̄ to me wher-
of thou were made/without dout on the one part
claye, thā howe moche vnder p̄ cōdicion of beastis
synthrewethe. Agayne/to what dignite/to what
felicite thou art called/et thā thou shalt clerlyse/p̄
merites of our lord haue neyther nūbre nor meas-
ure. What is moze despised thā scabetes: Yet is
a scabet pure i cōparison to p̄ filthines of a syner.
What is hygher than angels: Were hit nat out of
al measure to make an angell of a scabet: Nowe
mā more abiect than a scabet/he made greater
thā angel/I may boldly say/he made hym a god.

For whiche shulde nat I dare boldly say it y the scrip-
ture doth: I sayd pe be goddis, and excellent chil-
dren: What so euer cometh of god is made in a ma-
nere god. What so euer is loyned to the body & spi-
rite of Christe cometh into the felowshyp and pe-
takynge of his name. Herce if nothing be that thou
to thy merites mayst ascribe/glorifie the mercy of
god/worship the mercy of god/embrace & kysse the
mercy of god. If that any go about to claime any
part of this to hym selfe/Paule the apostle wyll by
& by crie out agaynst hym/yelding all these thyng-
es to the grace of god. All his pistis soude out y
woerde of grace: whiche as oft as thou hereste vs
derstaide y mercy of god to y comended. Of grace
it is, that we be purged fro synne/through grace
we beleue/of grace it is that by his spirite charite
is spredde in our hertes/wherby we do good war-
kes. So we be nat sufficient by our selfe/as of our
selfe:but al out ablenes cometh fro god. If Paule
sayd trouthe/where be those shameles felowes/y
felle to every body they; good warkes/as though
they had so moche at home/that they myghte en-
tyche other: They be misertable/that so felle their
good dedes/cursed they be that trust in mes war-
kes. Who that is greued with the fyre disease/let
hym here what the churche Laodices hereth in y
Apocalyps. Thou sayst: I am riche and plentifull
and nede nothyng/and knowest nat that thou art
a wretche/miserable/poute/blinde/& naked. But
they also syn more greuously/that of thabundance
of they; good warkes promyse other ryches. But
what

What couſaileth the holy gospſſe ſuſhe folke: I counſayle the ſayth he, to bye ſiryp golde of me proued, that thou mayſte be ryche in dede. And thou that knoweſt thyn owne pouerſte, whyp beggeſt of bryggers: S. James ſayth: If any want wyſdome, leſte him aſke it of god, that gryueth to eche abuſantly, and abyaydeth none therol. Every good gryſt, & every pſſeſt gryſt deſcendeth fro aboue fro þe father of lyghtes. And aſkeſt thou of a man y gaſtment of good warkeſſe, whiche is þe more pitteouſly naked, the more gayely he rekeneth hym ſelue cloſed: Acknowleſge thy miſery, and þe mercy of god is redy. Amōge me, whiche abyayd one a other of a good curte, whiche for one pleaſure loke to haue many, is nohtyng deſeret bought, than it that is bought with prayers: with god nothynge is ſo ſte as that þe is bought with. ii. liuel peſces of money, prayer & hope, for he that wyll ſell his mercy, hath gryue vs þe ſame price to pay for it. We haue ſpoken many thinges welbeloued bretherne of þe mercy of god, but therer is moche more to ſaſe, if we ſhuld repeate all thyngeſſe of holy ſcripture, whiche preyeſe & comēde to vs þe greatnes of diuine merci. Therer menāt is, þe I wyl exhort you in ſewe wordeſſe, þe none through preſumption make hym ſelue unwoorthy of the mercy of god, that is ſo redy: or through þe ill corage of myde deſpeyre of þe mercy of god. And after we wyl ſhortly declare, what thyngeſſe pouoke the mercy of god. And ſo make an ende of our ſermon, if the mercy of our lord bouchelafe to be preſent and fauorable vnto me ſpekyng to you.

God aborreth no thyng so moche as pryde & obsc
acienges: for he resisteth the proude, and giveth
grace to the humble. To this blynd madnes & mad
blyndnes many are brought throughe prosperite of
temporal goodes, whiche as forgetfull of theyr ma-
ker they liven after theyr pleasure, so moche vns-
thoughtfull to amende theyr lyfe, that they booke
vngnatiouenes, stronge & myghty in wickednes.
And as we rede in an other place: They booke their
yll dypinge, and reioyce in most vngnatioues thyng-
es: wherof Solomon wryteth: The wicked ma-
whan he cometh to the bottū of plā, he is carcles.
And of suche folke Paule wryteth: God giveth
them a peruerced iugement, to do those thynges/
that be nat comely. Some of them promise them
selfe, that they shall shape vnpunyshed for euer, &
despise holosome monyshyon, and wyll nat here of
suche thynges as shulde prouoke them to repen-
tance, sayeng: Let god haue heuen hym selfe, let
hym leaue vs the erth. Of these speketh Moyses
in his canticle, whan after many great benefites
of god to the people of Israell remembred, he ad-
deth: My welbeloued is waxed grosse & kycketh:
he is waxed fat and broode: he hath forsaken god
his maker, and is departed from god his saviour.
The psal. 72. peynteth this maner of me: They
be nat in the labour of me, & they shall nat be scor-
ged with me. Wycause pride reteineth them, they
be couered with iniquite & thei'r wickednes, they
be gone in to affectiō of hert. They haue thought
and spoken leudnes, and they haue talked wicked-
lye

ly agaynst almyghty god. They haue sette theyz
mouch agaynst the heuen, and theyz toge is gone
ouer in erthe. But herke what ende foloweth this
vnhappy felicite. But yet for all theyz wyles thou
hast begyled them, thou dyddeſt cast them downe
whā they wold arriuen vp. Howe were they discōſi-
ced: they fayled sodaynly, & perished for their wic-
kednes. Good lordē i thy cite ſhalt reduce þ image
of them to naught, as þ dreame of them that rysle
frō ſleep. On them that folowing Lucifers exan-
ple rysle vp agaynst god, ſhall fall þ our lordē chret-
neth in þ gospell: I ſawē Satanas as lightnyng
fal frōn heuen. And Cozozain through abundance
of transitory thynges wickedly ſwellyng, hereth:
Wo to the Cozozain, for thou that arte nowe lyfte
vp to heuen by thy pryde, ſhalt be plucte downe to
helle by the vēgeance of god. Paule alſo ſomtyme
on truſt of his countrey lawes was fierce & proude,
& thretned to ſee the diſciples of our lordē, and for
dit by the ryght hande of god ouerthrowen to the
erth he hereth: It is harde for þ to kycke agayſt
þ pricke. But bycause in his dede was ercoute and
nat wayward malice, he optayned mercye. Alſoone
as he acknowledged his syn, god forgaue hym, and
nat only forgaue hym, but alſo of a wolfe he made
hym a ſhepe, & of a tyran a poſtle. But the curse of
god hangeth ouer them that continue in synne, at
laſte beynge indurated and obſtinate therin, wyl
nat vnderſtāde to do well: whiche ſay to god: Go
thy way frō vs, we myl nat haue knowlge of thy
wayes. Agayne they þ Elaie ſpeaketh of whiche

our lord calling to weyng, waylyng, cuttyng of
theyz heate, and to weare shirres of heare, thep
make myth and reuell, kylling calues, and sacri-
fieng shepe, þ they may eate the fleshe, and drynke
wynne, sayeng: Let vs eate and drynke, for to mor-
towe we shal dye. And they as the same prophet
sayth, that scorne the thynninges of god, steryng
them to repēt: Byd byd agayne, byd byd agayne,
abyde abyde agayne, abyde abyde agayne, a litel
therre a lytell therre. And the whiche say agayne in
an other place: We wyll nat here our lord, but we
wyll dye in our synnes: to these as þ olde puerbe
sayth, Pacience oft greued turneth in to madnes:
and the mercy of our lord despised, is turned in to
greuouser dampnacion. For our lord mocked in
Eliae answereth after: The sayeng of our lord to
them shal be: Byd byd agayne, byd byd agayne,
abyde abyde agayne, abyde abyde agayne, a litel
therre a lytell therre, that they may go & fall backes
warde, and be all to tent, and attrapped, & taken.
These unhappy folke go, left in theyz yll desires,
alway waxynge worse, they fall in to the pvt of wic-
kednes, they be tangled in the cordes of syn, they
be take in the net of everlasting dampnacion, leading
theyz dayes amoge theyz goodes, & in a moment
they go to hell. O very wretched creatures, & hols-
ly gyue to distructiō, whiche like as beastis be fat-
ted to be kylde, whom neither the worme of syn
maketh to forgette pypde, nor so great hyndnes of
god redreth them to repēt. The mercy of god suff-
fith the so ofte to synne, þ thou shuldest amende,
he ḡ

he gyueth the space to repente, & in the mean while
he taketh nat frō the his benignite, he gyueth the
good helch, he gyueth the riches, he gyueth the o-
ther cōmodites of þy lyfe, as in maner settynge vp &
castynge coles of fire ouer thy hecd, þ if thou canst
nat hate thy syn, for that it is most shamfull of hit
selfe, yet at leſt shuldest begyn to hate it, ſich it diſ-
pleaseth ſo louyng a fader. Eschinus a pong mā
pecluing i a play þ maruelous hynones of his fa-
ther toward hym offēd þg, was moued, þ frō thēs
forth he wolde haue him i greater reuerēce, theſe
be his wordes: What chyng is this: is this to be
a fader, or this to be a ſon: If he were my brother
or felowe, how myght he folowe more my mynde:
Is he nat to be loued: ought he nat to be borne in
mynde: Ah he maketh me right careful with his
glynnes, leſt I ſhulde vnware do ought contr ary
to his mynde, ſo wittingly I wyl beware therof.

If faderly hynones teche wyry childre to hate
syn, thou baſſappy synner doſt thou ware more &
more obſtinate for ſo great goodnes of thy fader,
& herest nat Paule calling þ agayne frō madnes:
Doſt thou deſpise ſaſh he, the riches of thy good-
nes, pacience, and mekenes: Knowest nat that þ
gētylnes of god leadeth the to repētance: But aft-
er thy hardnes & vntrepētant haſte, thou getheſ-
teſt unto the a treasure of anger in the day of an-
ger, and the reuclaciō of the iuſte iugement of god.

No beast is ſo wyld, þ by mēſ diligēce & laboure
is nat tamed, & þ puoked by ſo excedyng benefit of
god, art alſo moze fierce agaynſt hym: No chyng
is ſo

is so harde that is nat made softe by crafte of me.
Brasse melteth in the furnes, y^rō by fyre is made
softe, horne with ware poured in soupleth, the in-
visible hardnes of y^r diamond is ouercōe wth gottis
blud: And o hatt harder than horne, harder than
yron, harder thā the diamond, that neither y^r fyre
of hell, nor the hyndnes of thy moste gēt^h father,
nor y^r blud of the vndefiled lambe shēd for the, can
mollifie: yea is made more harder than all these.
Nowe be ioyfull make triumphe of wickednes, y^r
hast ouercome wretche, thou haste ouercōe diuine
craft, whiche is most vnhappy victori. Unhappy
is the groude as Paule sayth, & nerest the curse of
god, whiche whan it ofte receiueth heuenly moy-
nes, it b^rigeth forth none other thing but thornes
& wydes: howe moche more vnhappy is he, that
is so ofte moisted with raine of diuine mercy, and
warech harde as any rough sturdy stonye stone, that he
wyl receyue no print of the holy ghost. The fynger
of god wrote the lawe to Moyses in stony tables,
so that thy hatt is sturdier thā these stones, wher-
in y^r holy goost can write nothing of Christis lawe.
Who shall cut vs these stony hartes but he, whose
dethe cloue y^r stones, y^r they myght go out of they^r
tūbes y^r were deed: Who shal giue vs a fleshy hatt
but y^r worde of god, that for vs was made fleshe:
But yet they be more desperatethā these, whiche
reioysyng in they^r syns, spred abrode blasphemous
& wicked opiniōs denyeng god to be aboue, or if he
be that mortal folkes busynes pteyne nothyng to
hem: to be no life after deth of the body: no immor-
talyte

talite to be prepared for them / that here lyued deuoutly in Christ Jesu: nor helle p̄pared for them that here serued the deuyll: the thretynnges of holy scripture to be bayne: the p̄myses of the gospel to be lyes: or they that by wronge expounding of scripture / defēde their mischeuous dedes for good actis: and the wōrde of god / wherby the yll desp̄es of the mynde ought to be corrected / they compell to supporste theyz fylthynes / to other crymes they laye the wickednes of heresy / as most wōrste rebuke. The palenes / whiche for great skele appereth in your faces / & the treblyng of þ holle body / shewe howe moche ye abhorre that ye haue herde. But wold to god we myght nat here thosē thynges amōge christen folke. I haue shewed you Scylla / on whiche rocke many rūne and perishe. Nowe I wyll shewe you Charybdis / a daunger greuouser thā þ most greuous & more ferefull. They be they whiche folowyng Cain & Judas the traitour / despeyre of forgyuenes swalloweth in to euerlastynge destruction. There is but one destruction / though þ reason of perishyng be diuers. Pharaō indurated sayth: I knowe no lordē / nor I wyll nat let the people go. What sayth Cain: My syn is greater thā I may deserue p̄don. And what sayth Judas: I haue synned betraing þ innocēt blud. Both they aknowlege the greatness of theyz synne / both they confesse it / both repēt theyz mysdede / but both they go away frō the face of our lordē / in whom onely is mercy & plētifull redēction frō synnes. For thus ye rede of Cain: And Cain gōynge away frō the face

of our lord / dwelled a rūne a gate in a countrey to
warde the Est. &c. And Judas departyng frō the
banket of sayntes / returneth nat agayne: He is
vnhappy / that so goeth frō the face of the mercy of
god / that he returneth nat agayne. This is he I
thynke / that Jeremias meaneth / whan he saith:
Wepe nat for þe deed ne mourne nat for hym: with
weyping bewayle hym / that goeth out / because he
returneth no more agayne. He wil nat þe deed to be
wept for / because somtyme he must arysse agayne.
He with al maner weyping shuld be wayled / þe cur-
seth hym selfe away from the well of euerlastyng
lyfe / and never by penance returneth agayne / scō
thens he went. That prodigall & riottous chylde
went away in to fer countrey / he left þe house of his
moost louyng father / but he is returned agayne.
Peter swarued far frō our lord / whan he forsoke
hym thuse: but shortly aft he came agayne / whā
he remembred the wordē that Jesus spake / he begā
to wepe byterly. He had forgotten hym selfe / but
whan he came to him selfe agayne / he returned to
Jesus. Lyke wise Eliae crieth: Remembre ye this /
& be ye confūded and you syners come to your harte
agayne. Peter remembred hym selfe / and returned
to his herte: the stony harte was take frō hym / the
pomisehart / out of whiche no drop of teares coude
be got: a flesshē harte was gyuen h̄y / out of whiche
anon sprāge a welle of teares / bytter for þe sorowe
of penāce / but holsome for the innocēcy to hym re-
stored. But Judas is nat returned to Jesus / but
he went away to þe prestes & pharisees / he yelded
agayne

agayne that woful moneynge, from thens herōne to
þ snare / & brake a sonder. These thinges our lordē
suffred amonge his disciples for our instruction.
Ye se howe diuers þ ende of two apostles synnyng
is. Judas þ was so oft puoked by our lordes me-
kenes to be sorȝ & amēde, stacke styll in his wicked
purpose. But Peter at the lokyng of Jesus vpon
þym remēbred our lordes sayeng, & by & by knew
þym selfe, and as unworthy of our lordes þfence,
he drewe abacke, nat to hange hym selfe, but to
wepe, that is, nat to despoyre, but to remedy. Iu-
das folowyng Cain the auctour of this mischiefe,
aknowle ged truly the greatness of his syn, but he
remēbred nat the wordes of our lordē, that every
wherē in holy scripture puoke vs to returne, that
stere vs to do penance, and promise vs mercy. For
what padge is in holy scripture, that soundeth nat
the mercy of god? I speke uat only of the newe tes-
tament, that is the lawe of grace, but also of the
olde testament, that is thought more rigorous.
Let vs here howe getilly our lordē in þ pphet Jes-
remy, that vnder the ydone of the spouse leauyng
her husbāde, abādoneth her every wherē to every
body, he reclaymeth his people to penāce: Turne
to me sayth he, ye childre returnyng agayne, sayth
our lordē, for I am your husbāde. And in Job our
lordē openeth the eare of the sinners, that he may
correct them; and speketh, that they shuld returne
frō wickednes. But they be wretchedes, þ agaynst
this our lordes voyce stoppe theyr eares, lyke the
desse edder, that stoppeth her eares for the nones.

lest a thulde here the boyce of the enchanter wyses
ly: To day sayth the psalme if ye here his voyce,
be nat harde herted. To day is ours/ as longe as
we be in this lyfe/ whiche all the while hit lasteth,
our lord cesseth nat to speke to vs / sterlyg vs to do
penance/ offryng forgyuenes, ppared. What sayd
I forgyuenes: The mercy of god is moze whiche
promiseth to them that returne a precious gyfte.
For thus we rede in Job: If thou wylt returne to
almyghty god / thou shalte be edifyed/ and shalte
boyde wickednes far fro thy tent: for erth he shall
gyue the a synt stone, & for a flint stome golden rys-
uers. Let vs here the mercy of our lord in Eliae
sterlyng vs to repentaunce: If ye leke saith he leke,
returne and come: if ye leke chende of puels, leke
hit nat in children of men, in whom is no saluaci-
on/ nor of echantours/ nor by hangyng your selfe/
but aske it of me, that alone both may and am re-
dy to forgyue. Only returne from those thynges,
that ye sylchly haue loued, & turned, come to me.
Agayne in the same pphet ethysyng al mankynde
to hym, he sayth: Am nat I a lord: and there is
no more god but I: God iuste and holy is none be-
syde me: returne to me, and ye shalbe sauued al the
costis of the erth, for I am god, and there is none
other. These wordes our lord speketh to gentils,
idolworshippers/ to makyllers, churche robbers,
lechers, blasphemers: & thou wretche by dispayre
woldest turne away from our lord: In olde tymme
whan synne bnpunished rayned amoge folke, the
merry of god semed to be drawen within þ narow
boundes

boūdes of Judee. But by the gospell mercy spred
ouer all costes of the woरde: In Jeremye also he
chretnech the obſtinate, but he offereth them for
gyuenes prepared that repente & amēde: If that
folke ſayth he, wyll do penāce for theyz ſynne, that
I haue ſpokē agaynt them: I wil also do penāce
vpon þ harme, that I thought haue done them.
And he þ a lyttel before th̄etned diſtructiōn, pluc-
kyng vp by the rotes, & ſparklyng about, promy-
ſeth thynges contrarie, and ſodaynly ſayth: I wyll
ſpeke of the people & realme, that I may edifie it,
and that I may plant it. Like wyſe in Ezechiel he
nat only pmiſeth hym þdō þ turneth agayne, but
also that he wold forget all the ſynnes that he had
done before: For whan he had afore remēbrede eu-
ry kynde of myſchefes and dānable dedes, he ad-
deth: If the wicked man wyl do penāce for al the
ſynnes that he hath wrought, and wil kepe al my
comandementes, and wyl do iugement and iuſtice:
he ſhal lyue and ſhall nat dye: I wyll nat remēbre
al the iniquitees that he hath wrought. Is it my
wyll ſayth our lord, that a ſynner ſhulde dye, and
nat rather þ he ſhulde be couerted frō his ſinnes &
lyue: And a lytell lower: Be ye couerted and do pe-
nāce for all your ſynnes, and your wickednes ſhal
nat diſtroye you: th̄owē away all your offences,
wherby ye haue trāſgressed: and make you a new
hart and a newe ſpirite. And why die ye the house
of Israel: Because I will nat the deth of þ dyeng
treasure ſayth our lord, turne agayne and come.
Why despeyſt thou wretche, ſith god ſor this ſet

dowme his son in to this worlde / þ þ shuldest haue
good hope: He hym selfe vndouted is the mercy of
god, of whom Dauid syngeth: O god we haue re-
ceyued thy mercy in þ myddis of thy churche. Be-
thou i the churche / and embrace mercy. He rysing
crieth: I wyl nat the deth of a synner, but rather
that he shulde be couerred a lyue. Here this voyce
thou vnhappy synner, shake of deedly slepe, rise a
gayne with Christ, that thou mayst lyue in hym.
For he reuiued / to thende þ deth of syn shulde nat
alway posseſſe the. And if any body suspect þ this
mercy of god is nat þpared / nor redy, but for these
that comyc feſſe a lyght syns, let hym here what
our lord with a clere voyce promiseth: Whan so e-
uer a synner bewayleth his synnes, I wyll forget
al his inquites. He excepteth no kynde of synne,
he pōdreteth nat the greatnes or multitude of offen-
ces. Be ſorþ only / and forgetfulnes of all thy syns
past is redy. For ſmall offences / without whiche
māſ frailte lyueth nat, we call dayly vpō the mer-
cy of god, ſayeng: Dimitte nobis debita noſtra. ac. For
gyue vs as we forgyue them that offede vs: And
we be herde / if we here our neyghbour prayenge/
that we ſhuld forgyue him. And alſo amōge deeds/
ly synnes is a certeyne order / as amonge mē ſome
ſlepe nat very ſoudly, ſo that with a litel whiſtlyg
they awake: there be that ſlepe more depely, that
one muſt ſpeke loude to wake them: there be that
ſlepe moſt depely, that vneth with great tuggyge
they wyl awake: ſo with god ſom be lighter deed/
ſome moſe greuously, and ſome moſte greuously.

But

But no kynde of dethe is so desperate and deedly,
þ he with his boyce dryueth nat a waye / at whose
boyce also they rise agayne / that were dead i theyz
graues : and no man is take with so depe sloubre
of deth / that is nat by hym reyzed. This thre fold
difference of synners þ deuout interpreters of hos
ly scriptures suppose signified to vs by thre cosses
that we rede were reyzed strom dethe to lyfe by our
lorde Jesu. The maister of the sinagogis daugh
ter / a mayde. xii. yere of age / he reyzed in þ house
a fewe admittid to se it / & he forbade to tell abrode
that was done. These be they / þ fyfte nat of pur
posed malice / but eyther by sleþenes of age / or by
mans frailnes / be so slyden into som synne / þ they
be nat yet obstinate in yll / nor yet no foule rumour
runeth of that mylde. Our lorde Jesus lightly
reyseth those with his hande put forthe / hydrys
theyz fylchynes / and prouidrys for theyz shames
fastnes. But he reyzed vppre the wyddowes sonne
with more busynes. Nowe the carkeys was caris
ed to the graue / and in goyng our lorde met them
he moued with þ sely womans weping / bade them
stande styl that bare the biere / he reyzed the yonge
mā. fyfth he sitteth vp / soone aft he speketh / shor
tly after he skyppeþ out of the coffyn / & is deliue
red to his mother agayne. These be they vndous
ted / that be so fer ironed in synne that they be infas
my can nat be reclaymed frō synnyng : they by os
pen penance lytell & lytell be reised agayne to life.
He sitteth vp / whiche forsakyng syn / lyfeth vp h̄y
selfe to þ purpose of a better lyfe. He speketh / that
confessyng

cōfessyng his soule synnes / aknowlegeth þ mercyp
of god. He is yelded to his mocher a lyue / that aft
al remedies accomplished / is restored to the comu-
nion of the churche agayne. Lazarus truly nowe
stanke in his graue. He is bewayled onely of his
desperate systers and scēdes / here Jesus bÿddecþ
to shewe hym the graue / he weþetþ / he makethe
grisely sounē with his mouthe / and is troubled in
spirite / he cōmandeth to take away the stōne / and
with a loude boyce he bÿddecþ hym to come forth /
he cometh forth / but he is bounde / he is losed / and so
at last he is yelded to his systers agayne. It was
no great chyng for our lord to reþe a carkeyþ. iij.
dayes deed / it is a greater maystrie to reþe a syn-
ner / that. pl. yeres lyued nat / but lay stynkyng des-
filed with al maner fylthy synne. A childe saith Es-
tate of an hūdred yeres shal dye / and a sinner of an
hūdred yeres shalbe cursed. And þ same our lord
Jesus wyl bouchesafe to reþe / so þ he at last wyl
here hym callyng. He cryeth dayly / arþe mayde /
arþe yonge man / come forþe Lazar. But he has
many / more than deed / here nat his boyce callyng
þs agayne to lyfe. But what chyng is to here but
to belieue: Incredulite or hard belefe stoppeth the
earis of wicked folkes / that þ boyce of holy scrip-
ture can nat entre i to theþ; myndes. Let þs pray
the mercyp of god / that he wyl bouchesafe to sōnde
out aloude his almyghty boyce / and to syngi it to
those wretched & desperate folke: Thou deſſe and
dūme spirite / I cōmandeþ / get þ out of this mā /
and entre no more in to hym. Nowe to the ende ye
may

may se more playnly howe redy the mercy of god
is to hym that repēteth & amēdeth. here Dauid :
I haue sayd. I wyll acknowlege agaynst me myn
vnrighousnes to our lordē : and thou hast forgyv
uen me the wickednes of my syn. Nat yet cōfessed
but to one only myndyng cōfession þ mercy of god
tūnch. Be sorþ cōfesse the / but let it be afore god.
Many wayle afore me / they wepe in þ sight of pe
ple / they confesse them to men / they rent theyz clo
thes / but it is afore þ people / they weare þ heare /
they sprynkle ashes on theyz heed / but it is afore þ
people. Whiche thynges if they were done before
god / þ is to say / with all the hart / with pure affec
cion / þ mercy of god cessereth nat. Cut & rent sayth
he / your hattes and nat your garmētes / for god
wyll nat despise a contrite and an huble hart. Let
vs wepe sayth the psalme writer / before god / that
made vs. Many faste / but nat the faste that our
lordē wylleth : many change theyz rayment / but
they change nat theyz affection. And yet it is so /
that these thynges also must be done amōge men /
that they / whom our malice prouoked to synne /
may be called agayne by penance to amēde. But
these thynges are unprofitably done amonge the
people / except they be fyrt done in the syght of god
Judas confessed his syn / but it was to the phari
ses : if he had cōfessed him to our lordē / by & by the
most mild mercy of our lord had embraced him. And
to thende our cōfession may be more acceptable to
god / O see þ pphet sheweth to vs also þ fourme of
confession : Take sayche he with you wōdes / ares

turne to our lord / and say to hym / Take away al
tayneit stō vs / and receyue good / & we shall gyue
the againe the culpes of our lyppes. Let vs also /
that haue wandred many wapes, returne to hym
agayne / that alone taketh away the sinnes of the
worlde / þ whiche for our sinnes shed his precioug
blud / let vs say to hym : Take away stō vs al the
þill / that we wickedly wrought. What frelye / And
receyue good / what good : The culpes of our lypp
pes. We shall gyue thankes to thy mercy / wherto
we be bounde for euery good dede we dyd after our
fal, thou shalt take stō vs þ is ours, & shalt receiue
of vs þ is thyn. Ye but se howe wel with him ac
cordeth the prophet Iohel / expressyng the same
sentence with other wordes, for whan god by him
had sharply thretned those that regarded nat his
mercy to them offred, this he bryngeth in after :
Returne to your god / for he is myld & merciful, pa
cient and of moche mercy / and repeyng vp on
mlice. The greatness of sinnes ouerthoweth þ / but
þ greatness of goddis mercy can lyft þ vp agayne.
Se by howe many wapes the prophet amplifieth it.
He is gentyll, orells as hit is in Greke mercifull.
Though this was inough that we shuld nat des
perye / yet he addeth : And having pite, þ we may
understant, þ he nat only helpeth vs, but also is so
ry for our iuels. And herwith nat cōtēt, he addeth
pacient / that is to say easyl / and nothynng hasty to
take vengeance / lyke as humayn mercy is light
ly turned to dysdayne. And yet o synnet thou des
perest. Herke therfore þ foloweth. And of moche
mercy

mercy. If thy synnes by many mistrust nat, met
ep is meche. What remayneth nowe, but that þ
must be conuerted, and go to him entisynge þ? But
if þ punyfhemētes of mercy feare þ, herke & take
corage: And taking repenteance of his malice. He
callēth the peynes and afflictions that are due for
our synnes malice. He taketh away synne, He forȝe
gyueth euerlasting peyne deserued. What resteth
chā: nothyng, but that thou shuldest aknowlege
the mercy of god. Endouced this is it þ foloweth
in Johel. And he shall leue after hym blesсыng &
sacrifice to our lord god. Truly this is it þ Osee
sayd: The culnes of the lyppes, that is to say, sac-
crifice of preye and thanke gyuyng. If any gres-
uously and ofte shuld offend a mortal man, howe
harde is the making at one, howe minderēt he the
wrōges, howe slowly affwageth the anger, howe
lightly for a trifyl falleth he in þ old grudge, howe
frowardly asketh he amendis for the offence: and
yet if they so receive them in fauour agayne, they
be called gentyl. God so oft offendēd, willingly pro-
uoketh vs to repente, he entiseth vs to forgyues-
nes, he perdoneth chretninges, he forȝyuet helle
peyne, he offretþ for punyfhemētēt benignite, pe-
and he nat only turceth his face towarde the syn-
ner, mendyng and repentyng, but voluntarilþ he
meteth hym turnyng agayne, & with his armes
spred abrode he wolenbrace hym conuerted. Uns-
douted the same is it that he p̄miseth in zacarie:
Turne ye to me sayth the lord of ostis, and I wyl
turne to you saith the lord of ostis. What is that

3.14. to say

say. Turne ye to me: acknowledge your wretched
nes / and despise my mercry. What is: and I wyll
turne to you: By and by I of a reuenger and pu-
nisher made an helper / wyll helpe forwarde your
purposes / that ye can nat bryng to passe by your
owne strengthes / ye may opteyne it by my fauour.
No man coude hol somely hate his syn / but if god
granted hit / except he take away the stony harte /
and put in a fleshie harte: but if a defiled harte
he woxe in vs a clene harte / except for an yll spirite
he renewe in our bowels a good iuste spirite. But
why take I this labour to reherce some olde plas-
ces of scripture / whiche declaren the marueplous
mercy of god: All the scripture of þ olde testamēt
alabout preacheth / syngeth / and lapeth before vs
the mercry of god. And where be those frātiche
fōles rather than heretickes / that of one make two
goddis / one of the olde testament / that was onely
iuste & nat good: the other of the newe / that shuld
be onely good and nat iuste / coude they nat at leest
wile here this songe / that is so often tymes reher-
sed in the psalme. Crvij. I knowlege to god / that
he is good / and that his mercy is in all woldes.
Where is mad Manicheus / that taught in his bo-
kes / that he that speketh to vs so louyngly by his
prophettes / and that dyd ordeyne Moyses lawe /
was no veray god / but one of the wycked dyuels.
The selfe same is god of both the lawes / the same
trouch the same mercy by Iesu Christ our lord /
sawe that in Moyses lawe be shadowes / in the god-
pell trouch / in the other was promise / in this is
pfor

þþoutmance: in that was moche and great mercy
cowarde the Jewes, here is the holle well of mercie
þþ or rather the see, that hath frowen ouer all na-
tions of the holle worlde, by whiche fode the syns
of al mortal creatures are washed and skoured a-
way. Surely this was the happy fode of mercy:
the olde fode (a fewe sauad) distroyed þ synners:
this holosome fode washeth away þ syns, & saueth
al þ beleue in the sonne of god. He that in booke of
the olde testament promyseth the Hebrewes repe-
cyng & amedyng, forgyuenes the same present in
the gospel crieth to every man: Come to me al that
labour & be laden, and I wyl refresche you. Take
my yocke vpon you, and ye shal fynde rest for your
soules. For my yocke is swete, & my burthe light.
Reue the lyfe of Christe ouer & ouer, what thynges
els se þe therin, but cōtinuall mercy toward every
body: He healed sickle folke frely, he fed the hungry,
he succoured them that were in perill, he made le-
pers holle & clene, he gaue the blynde their sight, &
restored þ lame theyr lymmes, he droue a way dys-
uels, he reysed dede men to lyfe, he assoyled them þ
were repetat. Agayne, serche out al his techyng,
what other thing doth it sauere, þā excedyng great
mercy of god: By howe many parables printeth
he þ same in our mydes, þ we shulde flyde no way:
for what other thyng sheweth the parable of the
shepe brought agayne on þ sheperdis shulders, of
þ þre of money lost & fownde of the holle folke that
mede a þflicid of þ seruant to whom all his duyte
is gyuen, agayne of the bserer, that forgaue both

the detours, of the publican & pharisee, of þ pyl-
grym hurt, whom the samaritan healeth, of þ cut-
rele stwardes to his detours, of þ discruer of his
maister, of the ryottous childe receyued agayne.
And the very cleapynge of the gospell, doth it nat
by & by promyse mercy: What promiseth hit: To
blinde sight, to þrisoners ydon, to þ broke holnes,
þhortly to speke a yere acceptable to our lord, that
desireth none other chynge but mans saluacion.
Nowe the same name of Jesu, that is of a sau-
our, what other chynge þmyseth hit but saluacion
& mercy: If he had proclaymed hym selfe a iuge,
it had be somwhat why one shuld haue be afrayd,
nowe thou herest sauour, and despeyrest of salua-
cion: And so forthe, to thende þ truste of saluacion
shuld seme more certaine, bicause it wold seme vns-
lykely, that so great a lake of synnes, that all mas-
kynde was defiled with, shulde be purged & cleased
with the blud of gottis & calues, he the son of god
got vp on the auter of þ crosse, and for our synnes
he offred hym selfe most effectuall sacrifice to clese
all our synnes. And hangynge on the same crosse,
he prayed for them that crucified hym, for them þ
cruyle & rapple vpon hym: & chynkest thou aknow-
legyngh thy syn, & sorowfully besechyng his mercy
he wyl deny þ forgyuenes: Trust to hym mercis-
ful, & þ shalþ fynde mercy, what thyng is it þ fait h
opteyneth nat of Christe: He that mistrusteth the
phisicis, is his owne let, that he can nat haue his
helth agayne. Truly so moche god inclyneth to
the þayers of wretches cryenge to hym, þ he gys-
ueth

with mercy at one other mans prayer, if he haue a
good hope with hym. The Canane crieth to him,
and her daughter is made holle: þ Centurion cri-
eth, and his servant is restored to his helth: the
maister of the Synagoge prayeth, & his daught-
er is reliued: the fater desireth, & his son is deliue-
red of a wicked dyuel. The apostles crie: O loerde
saue vs, we perishe, and they be al sauued. In mas-
sy folkes he taried nat the prayers of the mouth,
he seeth þ fayth of the cariers, & fayth to the man
sick of þ palsey. Trust son thy synnes be forgyuen
the. The mother only, & they that went with her
wept, & þ yonge mā þ was deed acilseth. Maryda
and Mary do nothynge but wepe and Lazarus relis-
meth. Mary the synner wepeth, she annoyncteth &
kyllseth hym, & she hereth: Thy synnes be forgy-
uen the. He prayeth inough that knowlegeth his
sickenes: he prayeth vehemently that wepeth and
hopeth. The womā diseased with the bloody flux,
priuely toucheth the garment of Jesu, and forth-
with she felt þ power of mercy cōming forth. Like-
wise we rede þ many other were cured by touchyng
þ garmentes of Jesu. So redy his mercy is every-
where, & at euery occasiō he succoureth wretches.
If þ darste nat call vpon Jesu, if thou canst nat
touche Jesu, at leſt touche priuely þ kyrt of his
garmēt, go to som holy mā, in whom this vertue
lynneth, that with his prayers he may cōmende
the to our merciful loerde. For by them ofte tymeſ
he putteth forth his power, beynge redy on every
syde to gyue saluacion to every mā. For þ entē he
came

came this was the food wherwith he was fedde,
þ he myght drawe synners to repētāce. And in the
boke of Genesis also, whan wicked folke by ther
mischefuous dedes puoked the wroth of our lord
þer at the prayer of Abrahā our lord had forgyue
many cities appoyned to be distroyed, if he coude
haue founde x. good men amouge the people.
The peple of Israel had deserued to be distroyed
þ our lord at the prayars of Moses restrayneth
the wrode of vengeāce. O blinde & unkynd folke,
that regarde nat the mercy of our lord, that is so
metynge, & so redy every where: but more unhappi
þ be they that wylfully despeyre of that, þ freely
is offered them. He is lightly pleased, whiche nat
willing is reueged. For what other thyng souneth
this boyce: And why dye ye the house of Israel?
Agayne in another place he bewayleth, that he al
the day had spred abrode his handes to the people
without beleue, & striuyng agaynst him. Agayne
in Micheas: My people, what haue I done to þ
þ, wherin haue I greued the ans were me? Lyke
þyse in Eliae: What is hit that I ought to haue
done more to my byne, and haue nat done it? Our
lord doth euery thyng, that he myght saue vs,
and shal we wylfully cast away hope of saluacion?
In the gospell also he wepeth for Hierusalem, the
whiche through obstinacy of syn caused distruictiō
of it selfe. Howe oft sayth he, wold I haue gethes
red the to gether, as the henne gethereth her che
kyns under her wynges, and ye wolde nat: Our
most merciful lord wepeth, that he can nat lesul
ly saue

þy saue wretches / & mystruse we hym / as though
he wolde nat saue vs: In the gospell all the house
tubleth for ioye / that the childe that was deed / re
þued agayn, þy þy perished, was recovered agayn.
He the good fathur exhorteth the holle company of
þangels and saintes to reioyce al to gether, that one
synner is brought agayne to penaunce, and thou
wretche despicerest / and enuies thyn owne salua
cio / and to our lordre so passyng great ioye: Belue
we that he / whom the deathe of synners greueth,
whom the conuertynge of wicked folke gladdeth,
þy þy deny forgyuenes to them, þy be sorþ & amede:
He calleth euery body to the brydale / he wyl haue
his house full / yea he compelleth the blynd & lame
to entre in to his house. Why tariest thou behinde
wretche: Why canst nat thou be drawen from the
drasse of swyne: Why striuest thou agayn þy mers
cy of our our lordre: Christ is the wisedome of god.
This wisedome as sayth Solomon departed out
of her fathur's house / came in to this worlde, preas
cheth opely / and her boyce is herde in the stretes.
She crieth in the frōte of multitudes / in þy wicket
tes of þy cite gates, she þnouȝeth out her wordes /
sayeng: Howe lōge wyl ye loue childhedlyf þe
þas / and soles couet thynges noþfull to them / and
vndiscrete hate counnyng: Turne you to my cor
rectiō. Beholde I wyl put forth my spirite to you
and shall shewe you my wordes. What thyngē is
more folishe / than forayne transitory thinges to
be depriued of everlastyng goodes: What is grea
ter wisedome / than by shōt sufferance to get im
mortaliþe

mortalite: Therefore they be all mad that cōtinue
in synne: they be wylle that chaunge they: lyfe in
to better. With what great labours setche we out
the most vile thyng amonge metass/ and so great
treasure offered and fely offered we despisen/ or þ
is more folyshe/we despeyze: God is riche in mer-
cy. The treasure of humayn riches is cōsumed in
gyuyng a way: the treasure of mercy can nat be
consumed. And this wyl I adde, that I may the
more put every body from despeyze of pardone.
God hath boude his fayth to man/ and as Paule
sayth, he can nat deny hym selfe. He refuseth nat
to be rebuked/ if he pforme vnt/ that he pmyseth.
For so he speketh in Esaie to the people defyled on
every syde: Be ye washed, be clene, take away frō
my syght your yl thoughtes, cesse to do wickedly/
lerne to do well, seke iugement, succour the oppres-
sed, deale truly with þ orphelin, defende þ wydow,
and come ye & rebuke me, saythe out lord. Thou
herest synner, what thyng els requyretþ our mers-
ciful lord, but onclþ chāgynge of thy lyfe: And lest
the normice of synnes ouerpreesse thy mynde, here
the forgivenes of them all redy. If your synnes
sayth he, were as karlette, they shall be made as
white as snowe: and if they were as red as oker,
they shalbe as white as wolle. If ye wil & ye may
here me, ye shall eate the goodes of þ ethere: Who
is so mad, that wyl nat be saued: What is more
easy, thā to here our most louyng fater, nothing
cōmandyng, but that pteyneth to our felicite: If
ye wyl sayth he, and ye may here. No man may
sauie

faue hym þ wyl nat. Saluacio is bþ fayth, fayth
is bþ herting. The worde is helthfull in thy harte
and in thy mouth. Only shut nat þ eares of thy
hart. Nowe if a king shuld say thus to his enies
or to suche as be coniected of high treason: What so
ever is done or was intended hitherto, I forgyue
it you al, mercy is redy for al, so they fro ches forth
Wolde absteyne fro lyke þ dedes: wolde nat every
body speke of þ kinges woderfull mercy, þ neither
cruelly punisched their bodies, nor cofisched their
goodes: But god yea with reward entiseth vs to
amende our life. Ye shal eate sayth he, the goodes of
the erthe. But they be vterly vnworþy to haue
þ fruicion of goodes of this woorlde, that by theyz
hungryous dedes offend the gyuer of all. But o
howe moche more precyous is it that þ gospell p-
miseth: I wyl gyue you a newe hart, I wyl gyue
you a newe spirite, wherby of the dyuels thralgs,
ye shall be made the chyldren of god, wherby ye
shal be made meþres of myn only begotten sonne,
& wherby ye shal entre into the heretage of the he-
uenly kyngdome. This is saythe he, my welbelo-
ued sonne, here hym. O thou Jewe, why turnest
thy eares fro irouch, & turnest to the tales of the
Talmudicens, & Deuterocis: Thou vnwyse phis-
iopher, why shuttest thy eares against this tes-
cher, & herkenest to Plato and Aristotel: Why he-
rest thou vnhappy progeny of Eve þ serpent with
ayne promises entisynge the to destruction, & he-
rest nat the sonne of god callyng the to the compa-
ny of euerlastynge felicite: Do penance sayth he,

the kyngdome of heuen is at hande. The son promiseth, the fathur pledgeth it, the holy gost in the mean while is gyuen as an ernest peny: and dousest thou to take & embrase so great felicite offred þ? And there is none other voice of thapostles thā of our lord, Do penance, & let eche of you be baptisid in the name of Iesu Christ in remissiō of your synnes, & ye shal receyue the gyft of the holy gost. And a litel aft: Kepe you fro this vngratious nacion, þ ye may be saued: leaue the spotted, fyldy, wretched lyfe, and take euerlastyng lyfe. Souldisours, publicans, harlottes, idolworshippers, maskyllers, nigromacets, baudes, aduouters, rūne hithe. None is shut without the passage to merscp lyeth egally open to all. The lyfe past is nat regarded, so one be repētant. For thou shuldest nat suppose this mercy of our lord, to stretche no farrether thā batisme, thoughe Mōtanus shut þ churche dores against them that slyde after baptisme, our lord never shutteth the doore of þ heuēly kingdome. The entrāce in to the churche by baptisme is ones gyuen, the figure wherof the arke of Noe beareth, but by the mercy of god þ seconde bōurde is left to eche after the shyp wracke, yea to come as gayne in to þ arke by penāce. For baptyme is nat twise take, as the deth of Christe is nat renewed, but the water of teares doth remayne, wherwith now the fyldy sinnes ben washed away, þ sope of holosome contricion remaineth, & the herbe of Bosch. Truly they ought to whom ones all synnes were scely forgyuen, and that buried with Christe by baptisme

by baptisme rose with hym agayne in a newe life,
to contynue with hym in that great gyft, that they
receiued. But our pitefull & mercifull lord knowes
þng the weakenes of mans nature, he wylled re-
medy of penance to be redy for eche euē to the ly-
ues ende. But because the day of deth is certayne
to none, all ought to watche, that they despise nat
þ goodnes of god: but if they hap to slide agayne,
by and by they shulde hast to remedy, before þ dise-
ase by contynuance ware incurable. Some folde
tyme with right great peril forbare baptisme euē
to the last day of theyȝ lyfe, whom some called bad
christiens, and some, yll watered, as christies nat
very true: but with more iepdy þ synner plōgeth
the remedy of penance, that is every where redy.
The christener is nat alway present, but lyeng in
thy bed thou mayst confess thyn vrighitousnes to
our lord, and purpose to amende thy lyfe. One is
nat alway present to washe thy body: teares be al-
way present, with whiche thou mayst washe þ fyl-
ches of thy soule. And nat without a cause a dout
is, whether þ baptisme be effectual, wherby whā
ther is no hope of life, and were in pāges of deth,
were rather sprynced with water than baptised.
For they shewed þ they wolde a synned contynually
if they myght haue lyued yll. But moche more
souly great lerned men doute, whether penāce
be fruteful, þ is plōged a purpose, nowe deptyng
hēce they take it, and wold nat take it, except deth
compelled them. For lyke as grōde ofte moysted w
heuēly raine, þygeth forth naught els to his tyls

let than thornes & wþdes/ is cursed & caste in to þ
fyre: so god other while for his goodnes obstatip
despised, endueth them with a peruerced mynde.
Wherfore þ sūrest way most dece bretcheris, nat
to plonge the mendyng of the lyfe, but by & by at
the voyce of our lord, callyng vs to do of þ old man
with his dedes and desyres, leſt our lord so oft nat
herde, wþll nat here vs agayne callynge to hym.
Dreadful is þ voice, wherwith he threcneth them
that wþll nat here him mercifully callyng. Because
sayth he I called you, & ye turned away: I reched
forth my hāde, & ther was none that wold le it: ye
despised al my couſayle, and set naught by my res
dukes: I also wþl laugh and scorne i your distru
ction. Whā it shal fall on you that ye d̄ad. Whan so
dayne calamite ouerthroweth, & ruine as a tempest
dasheth downe, whan trouble & gressfe assapleth:
than they wþll call on me, & I wþl nat here them.
They shal arise perly, and they shal nat fynde me,
because they hated my lernyng, and wolde nat co
cypue the d̄ede of their lord, & wolde nat rest wþd
my couſaile, and wold withdrawe fr̄ al my corre
ctiō. God punishest diuers wayes, þ he might co
rect vs. At last whā our obſtacenes hath ouercōe
al remedies he forſakeith vs as desperate, and lea
ueth vs w/out owne ſtre wþl. Like as a phisiciō aſ
ſaynge al þ his crafte can to put away the disease,
whan he ſeeth the pacient forſake all medicins, at
last he leaueth hym with his ſickenes, as he that
wþll nat lyue. Mercy ſayth the psalme, & iugement
I wþl lynge to þ. The day of iugement abydeth al
after

after they shal be departed this lyfe. As longe as
this lyfe lasteth, there is hope of mercy. Therfore
while thou lyuest beseeche our lord of mercy. But
they that lie dyeng, or they that extreme olde age
opresseth, nowe in a maner lyue no more. Here þ
cousayle of the wylle Hebrewe, what euer thou be
that from day to day drawest the lynde of wicked-
nes, and makest no ende of synnynge: Turne the
to our lord saith he, and forsake thy sinnes. Pray
the face of our lord and mynishe thyng offences.
Returne to our lord, and turne away fro thyng bry-
gatiousnes, and hate cursynge: and knowe the
iustices and iugementes of god, and stande in the
lot of proposition and speche of almyghty god, go
into the partes of the iuste worlde with þ lyuyng
& gyuyng confession to god. Thou shuldest nat as-
byde in the errour of wicked folke, confess þ before
deth. The confession of one deed perisheth as nos-
thyng. Thou shalt confess the liuyng. Alyue and
in helth thou shalt confess, & prepse god, and glo-
rifie in his mercies, o howe great is the mercy of
our lord, and his fauour to them that returne to
hym. Thou herest þ great mercy of god is redy,
but that is if thou alue & in heale wylt be confesssed
to our lord. But what shal we say of them, whose
bodyes be vnable to synne, & yet þ mynde putteh
nat away the synfull appetite: and whan by rea-
son of age the body is nere deed, that they can nat
do wycched and fylthy actes, yet they leaue nat to
speke leuidly: Howe shulde they be confesssed to our
lord alyne, that leaue sooner to lyue þā to synne?

But

But thou yonge man in thy flowryng age / wher þe
lógest the medyng of thy lyfe / dayes / monethes /
& yeres: If thy body were diseased with the dropsy / and thou haddeſt before þe redy a certayne ſure
remedy for þe disease / woldest þe ſay / The next yere
I wyl heale my ſickenes: I knowe wel þe woldest
nat be ſo mad / but þe woldest haſte moſt greedily to
be healed. And i þe diseases of þe ſoule moſe
perillous / tariſt / diuineſt for the ſro day to day / ſro
that day to that / yea thou deſſeruſt thy ſaluation
to þe day of thy dethe: And who iſt thy ſurete / that
thou ſhalt lyue tyl to morowe: But theſe thinges
be nat ſpokē / to thende that any ſhulde deſpeyze of
forgyuenes / but to thende we wold wroſt fro cche
the careles continuance in synne. There iſt synne /
þe neither in this worlde nor in the worlde to come /
iſt forgyueſe. God forbyd þe any of vs ſhulde ſwarue
ſo far wyde. And therfore þe moſt ſure thynge iſt to
eſchewe synne. The next iſt / that by & by we put it
away by penance / that iſt wrought vns kylfully.
A good man falleth. viij. tymes on a day / but he riſeth
agayne: al though this be ſpoken by veniall
ſyns. And therfore our lord eoft tymes threſteth
vs ſharply in holy scripture / leſt on trust of forgy
uenes redy / we ſhuld walowe in to the myer of vn
gratiouſ dedes. And therfore þe plaifer of penance
iſt nat gauen / that we wylfully ſhulde continue in
our diſease / but leſt he whiche perchance falleth
ſhuld be loſt for euer. In Amos our lord eoft thon
deth agaſt thre or four wyckednesſis: Shall
nat I abhorre them: It iſt wyckednes to thynke

yll. Here by & by we shulde take repentance, but is
is greater wickednes to wyl to pfourme it y chou
dyddest mynde: at leſt frō y grice y ſote ſhuld ſtep
to better. But the greuouſt offence is, fylthely to
pfourme it y thou dyddest wickedly purpose. And
here we be neither ſorþ nor amende, but we put to
it y fourth wickednes/accustomyng vs in syns, &
heappyng syns vpō syns. Nowe at this poſt may
nat our lord wel abhorre vs: Yes truly nere y his
mercy paſſed his iuſtice. Beholde what foloweth
after ſo ſharpe thretnynges in y ſame pphet: This
ſayth our lord to the house of Iſrael: ſeke & ye
ſhal fynd me/ſeke your lord & come. Let vs here
our lord thretnyng/leſt we ſhuld ſyn: let vs here
our lord reſtayning vs, y we deſpeyze nat. Oſ
els wo to vs if he ſhuld do to vs that he thretneth
by the pphete: and after the thyrde or fourth wic-
kednes he ſhulde turne a way frō vs his mercy, &
leauē vs alone to our wyl. Yea with many of vs it
ſhulde go yuel/ if our lord ſhulde turne his face aſ
way after the thouſande wickednes. But by & by
as his rightouſnes beginneth to warke rigorouſeſſe.
Mercy ſteppeth forth & ſayth: O lord god be mer-
ciful: I pray the who ſhal lyft vp Jacob for he is
a babe: And agayne: O lord god I pray the ceſſe
who ſhall reyſe vp Jacob for he is a babe: Thus
Mercy our beſt deſender pledeſt the cauſe of our
ſtaiſnes. Nowe here howe redy forgyuenes is to
one repentyng & amending. Our lord ſayth he
hath had pite upon hym. It ſhal nat be ſayd our
lord. Ye ſe howe ſoone he thretnyngē bengeance.

repentech, if we truly wolde repent our misededes. It shall nat be, sayd our lord. I praye you, what mother is so lightly pleased with her child? Therfore syth we haue a lord so easy to please, & an aduocatrice so effectual, what thing is there, why as my despeyring of hym selfe shulde eyther continue in sinnes, or with Judas flee to hange hym selfe? Euen for the same purpose our lord by al meanes myndyng our saluacion, suffered most excellent & most approued me to fall in greuous synnes, that by theyr example he myght corage & confort vs to hope of perdone. What thinge in holy scripture is more laudable thā kyng Dauid: he was a kyng he was a pþphet, he was a man to goddes myndes, of his lineage Christe was promised. But into howe foule, in to howe many folde a synne dyd so great a man fall: he hereth of Nathan þ rebuke and cruell chretynnges of our lord. But Dauid with two wordes turneth all this anger of god in to mercy. He sayd: I haue offended agaynst my lord: And forthe with Nathan sayde: Out lord also hathe transported thy syn thou shalt nat dye. The chretynnges be of a length, þ he may correct, but howe swyft is the boyce of mercy: Thou shalt nat dye. Like wise by Esiae Ezechias hereth: Thou shalt dye, & shalt nat lyue. Ezechias wept & made great lamentacion. The pþphet the messenger of dethe was nat yet gone halfe the kynges court, but the mercy of our lord called him agayne, sayeng: Be turne backe, and say to Ezechias capitayne of my people: This saych our lord þ god of Dauid thy fader.

father / I haue herde thy prayars / & haue seen thy
weppynge / and I haue healed the. The thyrde day
after this thou shalt go in to the tempele of our lord.
The thyrde boke of kynges wytnesseth þ same of
Achab. There was nat suche another as Achab /
Whiche was sole to thentēt he might do mischife
in þ sight of our lord. And he hereth : Thou hast
kynde / & more ouer hast possessed : As whā he had
ayne Naboth he occupied his vineyard : but at
last he was so afayde witt þ cruel chretyninges þ
he rēte his clothes / & ware a sherte of heare, he fas-
ted, & slept in wollen, & wondred hāgynge downe
his heed. Achab was stoward, he had oft despised
our lord rebukyng hym, he had heaped syns vpon
syns : and at last he was rather fearede with drede
of mischeses hangyng ouer hym / than myndyng
to repēt & amende : and yet our lord of excedyng
mercy speketh to Hely : Hast nat seen how Achab
hath hūbled hym before me : bycause he hath hū-
bled him selfe for my sake, I wyl bringe in no mis-
chiese in his dayes. If þ might of false repētāce be
so great / that it can wreke the reuegynge sword our
of the hāde of god / what shal the mynde do, truly
changed in to a contrary affection and nowe nat for
drede of punishment, but for the loue of god abhor-
reth þ he miswrought : for that entent he suffred
Peter, whiche he had apointed chiche of his churc-
che, openly to fall. He wept only / & optained mercy.
Whan he deliuered his shēpe to hym to fede / for
whiche he suffred dech, dyd he cast in his tethe / þ
offence of chiche forlakyng our lord. No forsothe /

for nowe al that was so washed away with teares
that there remayned nat a steppe in our mercifull
lordes remembrance. Paule þ psecuter of our lordis
churche was ouerthowen, & was made þ teacher
of naciōs. We haue great examples of them that
synned/and eke of them that repented, we ought
nat by example of any to be puoked to synne, lest
we shulde tepte our lord, but if any shulde hap to
be attrapped by synne, he hath examples of repē-
tāce/lest he shuld despeire. But they do wayward-
ly, that wyll nat folowe hym in repētyng, whiche
they folowed in synnyng. Howe many princes be
ther that smyle at theyz auoutres and māslaughs-
ters for the example of Dauids. Although in Da-
uid were so many excellent vertues, þ this offence
myght haue ben forgyuen in recōpēce of them: but
wolde to god lyke as they folowe hym offendyng,
they wold so folowe hym eke repentyng. He spred
abrode his synne through al naciōs of the worlde:
and despised þ delectacions of the court, & for pur-
pul he weareth a sherte of heare, and as bread he
eateth ashes, & mingleth his drinke with wepyng:
every night he washeth his bed with teares, and
mysteth his couerted with weping. And he was
nat ashamed to say and synge this verse of penāce
to al synners: Haue mercy vpon me lord after thy
great mercy. And after the multitude of thy mer-
cies put awaye my wickednes. He was iuge, and
gaue sentēce of deth agaynst hym selfe. For great-
ly disdaynyng he saythe: Our lordelyueth, for he
is the childe of deth that hath done this thyng.

He

He coude nat more evidently be condemned: than
by his owne wozde. God was iuge and yet as the
psone were changed, he comitted the iugement to
hym that was gylty. The iuge was taken with a
tryp, and he ouercame that comitted to hym þ iu-
gemēt: Dauid was happily ouercome, god ouer-
came mercifullly, whā he shewēd h̄ synne to hym
selfe, that had forȝot hym selfe. Before as a cōque-
tour, and drōken with vnhappy prosperite, he ac-
complished his pleasure with þ womā þ he loued,
he delited in his moste swete childe, but whan he
was conuerted to our lorde, than at laste he sawe
where he was: and what difference was betwene
a rightous mā & an vnrightous, like as an other
prophecy teacheth. Whā a sinner with al his hart
aknowlegeth his fylthynes, & cōfesseth hym selfe
worthy of punyshemēt, thā our lorde is iustified,
and ouercometh whan he is iuged, that is, whan
he offreth the iugemēt to man as to be iuged him
selfe. But they that ordeyne theyz owne rightous-
nes, make god in a maner vniuste & a lier, whiche
wyl that his mercy shuld be knowen in euery mā,
and reioyceth to turne our vnrightousnes i to his
glory: seyng where synne was plentiful there his
ſe liberalite abūdeth. The olde Adam dyd nat so,
but whan he was called to confession, he laide the
blame on his wife. Like wise she called to cōfessiō,
blamed the serpent, If they coude haue song the
songe of Dauid, God haue mercy on me, they had
nat ben banished paradise, Cain nat goyng out of
kynde, what sayth he, prouoked of our lorde to res-

pent. Am I my brothers keper? If he had sayd,
I haue synned, haue mercy: and if he had sayde
hit with al his harte, the mercy of god was redy.
There is a carnall sorowe, that engendreth dethe,
suche as Judas had: but a gayne there is a god-
ly sorowe, that bryngeth forth saluacion and sure
ioye. Paule tenderly louedde all his, yet he reiops
seth that he had caste the Corinthies in suche a sor-
owe, he damned, that had a do with his fathers
wyfe, as out of suche sorow, as after a bytter play-
ster followeth continual ioye. And in þ mean while
sure hope of saluacion myngled with repentance
tepereth the bitterness of the sorowe. So Dauld,
whan he had simply confessed his synne, and þ des-
serued wreache of god, herke howe moche hope he
conceyued of the mercy of god: O lord sayde he,
sprynkle me with isope, and I shalbe cleasned, thou
shalt washe me, and I shalbe made whiter than þ
snowe. Nat of his owne good dedes, but by sprinct
lyng of þ imaculate labes blud he promiseth hym
selfe putenes, and whan he acknowledgeth hym selfe
frō his mothers wombe with spottes defylde, yet
out of þ washing he hopeth to haue fairenes of in-
nocency, that shulde passe the snowe in whitenes.
And he dothe nat only hope to opteyne innocency as
gayne, but also that þ wo of penaunce shuld turne in
to spiritual ioye. He sayth: Thou shalt gyue to þ
gladnes to my herte, & my hable bones shal lepe
for ioye. Yelde to me the gladnes of thy saluacion,
and cōfyrme me with thy p̄ncipal spirite. O wōs
derfull crūſt of a synner, & yet more largely he pros-
miseth

myselfe hym selfe somwhat: And my tonge sayth
he shal shewe outwarde with great mirth thy ius-
tice. O lordē thou shalt open my lippes/ and my
mouth shal shewe thy preysē. Whan he hath pro-
nud the mercy of our lordē so great/ he wyl che re-
hort other þ they shuld repent & amende. So our
lordē sayd to Peter: And thou couerted somtyme
confirme thy bretherne. David shulde haue peris-
hed/ if he had comytted hym selfe to Justice/ but
he in that part to weake called vpon mercy, & ther-
fore the mercies of our lordē he syngeth for euer.
They that plede matters amōge men/ as ofte as
theyz cause is in leopdy, if they may, they remoue
it in to an other courte/ all though they be in dout
whether they shall synde there a more egall iuge.
And truly may hap other while/ he that appeleth
may appele to his dāmage. But to vs moost dere
bretherne/ hit is a thyng fer fer more sure/ nat to
stryue with the iustice of god/ that is/ nat to caste
þp our heles agaynst the pricke/ but by and by to
calle vpon his mercy. And truly in mennes iuge-
mentes/ they say there is no thyng surer/ than if
we may by some colour clene deny the cryme, þ is
layde agaynst vs: and the rhetoriciens teache the
most miserable state of a cause to be: whiche they
cleape deprecacion/ whan the defendant sayth/ I
haue offēded/ forgyue me. Here contrary wise there
is no thyng surer for vs than wylfully to acknow-
lege/ what so euer we haue myslrought/ and to
beseeche þ iuge of mercy. Hicher lyth the goodnes
of god in all holy scripture so louyngly prouoketh

vs / sith the examples of so many noble men exhortē
vs hicher / whi shuld any be fōnde / whiche despē
ryng of hym selfe had leauer ware olde in synnes? /
There is nothynge i god / that is of simple nature /
that shulde striue with other, and yet if we behold
those thynges that chance vs / a styrfe shulde semē
to be betwene goddes iustice and his mercy. / Ius
tice calleth to punishment / but mercy as sayned
James layth, leapeth vp agaynst iugement as a
conquerour. Who dyd euer crye: Jesu haue mer
cy: but by and by he optained mercy. The Cana
nee crieth: Good lord haue mercy / & her daugh
ter is made holle: Every synner eke shulde crye:
Good lord haue mercy / and his soule shalbe hea
led. He the blinde begger crieth: O son of Dauid
haue mercy / and his cloke cast away he receyued
his sight. Let vs eke crye: Jesu the sonne of god
haue mercy on vs / let vs crye strongly & constātly
euen anypmōge the houtlynge multitudes of ys
imaginacions / & he of this worldly beggers shall
make vs enheritours of the heuenly kyngdome.
Who so euer seketh cōmodites of this life, is blfyd,
is a begger, & i a patched cloke beggeth a halfe pe
ny of the people. They yseke to get a kyngdome,
yea though they semē to go about a great thyng,
they do nothynge els but wretchedly begge a halfe
peny of a multitude. They yhunte for honours /
and dignites / be they never so great / they crie to y
people: Take pite, gyue an halfe peny. But if any
wyl erie: Jesu lord haue mercy / he is redy to gy
ue vs hym selfe. Our lord erieth / he calleth y to
hym

hym/ art nat vnhappy but if þ rūne: whyp tariest
in thyne vnhappy clothes: The alter of mercy is
open / and thou courtnest thy selfe to the bondes of
madnes. The saintuary of goddis mercy is ope-
ned / and thou fliest in to the hurlepyt of vnhappy
despeyze. Thy sauour recheth the his hāde / and
thou turnest away thy face. Heuen is open vnto
the / and thou rūnest downe heedlynge in to helle.
The lappe of goddis goodnes is hold open to the /
and thou fliest to the vnhappy halter. The theſe
on the crosse hereth / This day thou ſhalte be with
me in paradise / and thou gyueste and byndest thy
ſelfe to hell. But now it is tyme to fulſyl that I ha-
ſtely promiſed / by what meaneſ the mercy of god
may be ſoonest got. For of prayers / wepyng / faſ-
ting / wear ing of heare / & aſhes / þ is of a contrite
hart / is nowe ſpokē here and there through al the
ſermon. And truly theſe thynges opteyne mercy of
god: But well doyng to our neyghbour wreteth
it out / if I may ſo ſay. ſuche as every man wyl
haue god be to him / let him ſhewe him ſelfe ſuche
to his neyghbour. The grekes prouerbe ſaythe:
Fauour getteth fauour. But with vs mercy getteth
mercy. Luce. vi. Gyue / and to you ſhalbe gy-
uen: Forgyue / & ye ſhalbe forgyuen: And by what
meaſure ye haue met to your neyghboure / by the
ſame god ſhall met to you. And I call mercy or prie-
te / nat only whan vengeaſce is forgyuen / or nede
of our neighbour eſed / but what ſo euer good dede
is done to our brother with a good myde. He that
teacheth him that erreth / that correcteth the miſ-

doer, and other while he that with strokes chāstiseth
seth one synnyng, if he do it with a christē affectiō,
he doth the warke of mercy vpon his neyghbour,
he that exhorteth them ȳ shynke from their good
purpose, that cōfōrt the wofull, that bring the des-
peyred, in to good hope he is merciful toward his
neyghbour, and eyther he recōpēceth or puoketh
the mercy of god. And truly it is vnytēng the
mercy of Christiēs to be of lytell price & cōmon.
A paynyn wyl gyue almes to a begger, any man
wil helpe his frēde in iēopdy, ȳ gentiles eke pdone
some offēces. But what our mercy ought to be ȳ
gospel teacheth: Be merciful, ȳ ye may be ȳ chil-
dren of your father, that is in heuen. If ȳ mercy
of god toward vs be of ȳ cōmō sort, mercy of ȳ cō-
mon sort suffiseth vs toward our neighbour. But
if he cōmande his sonne to shyne on good and yll:
& suffereth so riche hauour of this worlde to be cō-
mune to the wel disposed and wicked, if we wyl ap-
pere his true chilđē, let vs be weldoers, nat only
towardē our frēdes, kyngs folke, and that wel de-
serued it, but also towardē strāgers, ye to our foes
and ȳ yuell deserued it. If god for vs idolworship
pers, and children of helle gaue his only sonne, se-
meth it a great thyng if we agayn do good to our
ennemy, whiche is our brother, in that he is a rea-
sonable creature. And if our righteous lord for our
synnes offred vp hym selfe, in ȳ auter of ȳ trosses,
semeth it a great thyng, if we forgyue our neygh-
bour the wrōge he dyd to vs: Howe dare a synner
crys, Lordē hauē mercy vpon me, ȳ denyeth mer-
cy to

ry to his brother: Whal nat he worthilys here this
of þ gospell: O naughty seruante, I haue forgyuen
the al thy dutys, oughtest nat thou to haue pite on
thy felowe seruante with the: What good turne so-
ever we do to our neyghbour, our lordes suffreth it
to be ascribed vnto hym, whan he hath nede of no-
mā: & al be it þ god hath fyft bestoweded it al on vs
most heapyngly, what good so euer to our power
we haue bestowed or done to our bretherne, yet as
though he were bounde for our good dedes toward
our neyghbur, he promiseth to yeld vs agayne good
mesure, with moche ecrease, full & wel heaped vp.
Is it nat good mesure, whā for her boying a poore
man our lordes receiueth the in to the kyngdome of
heuen? The best way to ware riche is to ware poore
by sucheliberalite. The wylle men of this wold
wyl nat suffre their money to rust in their chestis,
but they leaue it with the bankers, that by vsury
they may get more to it. They that wil beriche of
heuenly goodes, they must haue ado with þ most
liberal blarer. We call them happy that be ryche,
and in the gospel the merciful be called happy, by
cause they shal opteyne mercy. He playeth þ blus-
ter with our lordes sayth he the wylle Hebrew, that
pitieþ þ poure folke & he shal quite hym agayne.
And the prophet sayth: Bedeme thy synnes with
almes dedes: because as the prince of tha postles
sayth: Charite couereth the multitude of sinnes.
Ye here therchange: but it is with a great laker.
Like wise he the mistical synger: Happy is that
man that pitieþ & ledeth. Therfore with god he

playeth a poynt of bisyng, who so euer for the loue
of god doth his neyghbour a good turne. ye here
the exchange, ye here the encreasynge, ye here the
redemyng. Who so euer hurteth his neyghbour,
is in danger of hym that he harmed: Who so euer
to his power helpeth his neighbour, byndeth hym
that he doth the good turne to. Do nat aske venge-
ance on hym that offended the, but make exchāge
with god: forgyue thy neyghbour a fewe & lyght
offences, and god of couenant wyl forgyue the al-
thi. Desire no reward agayne of thy neighbour,
to whom thou dyddest a good turne, but aske it of
god what so euer thou disposest well, & he for goo-
des transitory, wyl reward the euerlastynge.

There be dyuers sacrifices, with whiche god is
pleased, spirituall hymes, songes, prayers, wat-
chinges, fastinges, homely rayment: but no man-
ner sacrifice is more effectuall than mercy toward
our brother. So saith our lord, and lerne what it
is: I wyl haue mercy & nat sacrifice. He dāpneth
nat sacrifices, but he p̄ferreth mercy aboue them
al. The same þ our lord Jesus w̄t safeth to teche
vs w̄ his owne mouth in þ gospel, he caught lōge
before by the mouth of Michēe þ p̄phet. Soz whā
our lord had rebuked the iuincible obſtaclenes of
þ people i yrs, þ people being thoughtful by what
mean they myght apease god, rightously puoked
with so many cursed dedes, sayth: What thyng
worthy may I offere to god: Whal I bow my kne-
es to almighty god: What shuld I offere to him sa-
crifices, and yetelyng calues: May he be pleased
with

With a thousande wethers / or many thousandes
of fat gottes? Shal I gyue my fyrt begotte sone
for myn offece / the frute of my wombe for y synne
of my soule? Hitherto speketh y people / vnderstanas
dynge that no sacrifice coude of man be offered to
purge away synnes / yea if aboue many thousande
wethers / he wolde offre vp his fyrt bogotte sone
to him most vere, but the prophet sheweth a moze
effectuall sacrifice / wher with by and by the aiger
of god is apealed. O man / I wyll shewe y / what
is good / and what our lord haue of y / thou
muste do iugement / & loue mercy / & thoughtfullly
walke with thy lord god. What is to do iugement:
to hurt no man / what is to loue mercy / to do them
good y deserue it nat. Paule the apostle moze ouer
addeþ somwhat to y preise of mercy. If I shuld
sayth he / gyue my body to be burned / and haue no
charite / it auayleth me nothyngs. Abrahā pfered
a great thyng / that was redy to offre his only son
in sacrifice / that he loued specially but he profreth
more / if any for y loue of god deliuereth his owne
body to be burned. And yet charite is moze accep
table than that sacrifice. And what thyngelis is
charite towarde our neighbour but mercy? Ther
fore spche all we continually in all thynges nedē y
mercy of god / our study ought yyl to be / howe one
of vs may mercifully helpe an other / gone with
an other bear yng y burthes to gether / we may ful
fyl y lawe of Christe / that rather requireth mercy
than sacrifice / and wylleth vs to redeeme his mer
cy with mercy shewed on our neyghbour. But as

my mynde excedyngly reiyseth whā I cast with
my selfe, how great ȳ mercy of our lord is toward
vs and howe redy for vs he wold it shuld be, so an
huge great sorowe ȳceth myn harte, as ofte as I
behold inwardly how scant the myndyng of mercy
is amōge Christiens. If we were truly mercifull
our liberalite wold reche euē to the Turkes, we
shuld cast coles offyre vpō theyr heedes, that they
ouercome by our goodnes, at last shulde come to ȳ
fellowship of our religion. Howe we Christiens by
warres, roberies, theftes, oppressions, more cru-
elly greue & vex Christiens, than any wyld beast
greueth the ennemy therof. If thou beholde the
luker, what other chyngē do we but one lyue by
deuourynge an other, after the maner of fyshes?
Who is nat redy for smal auaile to begyle his bro-
ther, whose nede he oughte to succoure. Howe by
our brothers pouerte we go about to get our auā-
tage, our brother for faute of meate dyeth, ȳ more
syopdy I se hym in the deder I sei to hym in that
he nedeth. Howe unlowly is our stately fiersing
agaynst our inferiours: how great is the rebelliō
of chynferiours agaynst the superiours, how seld
or in no place is pure charite: All places be full of
braulinges, detractiōs, & backebitinges. And we
nat only quicke a lytel wrong with great vēgeance,
but wilfullly harme them ȳ dyd vs no hurte. And
the mean while we mynde nat, howe great mercy
our lordē hath poured on vs: whiche he wyl calle
agayne, except we poure it agayne on our neygh-
bours that we receyued. If ye seke saith ȳ pphet,
seke,

seke. If we seke the mercy of god, we must seke it
truly & with alour hert. Turne you & come. She
turneth her to vs, if we wil turne to her. The mer-
cy of god came to vs, whan the sonne of god des-
cended downe in to erthe: let vs go to her agayne.
Our most mercifull lord inclineth hym, that he
may assoyle an aduouter, let vs agayne lyfte vp
our affectiō to him bowyng to vs. The fyſt grice
is, to cast away synne. So philicions fyſt purge
the body, that after they may put in better iues.
So chou synnet fyſt cast out of the mynde yll af-
fections, that streue agaynst god; lechery, couets-
tousnes, riot, pride, anger. Whan the cōtrayuer in
synne besecheth the mercy of god, doth he nat as
though an enemy armed, holding his sworde and
bucle in his hande, woldē desp̄ye peace? He that
asketh receyueth, he that seketh fyndeth: to hym
that knocketh the doore is opened. If ye aske mer-
cy, aske it truly: if ye seke, seke aright: and if ye
knocke at the doore of mercy knocke truly. Wyll ye
haue example of one truly askyng mercy? He the
prodigal childe asketh it aright, but þ was whan
he had leſte þ hogges, & whā he was returned to
his fater. O fater I haue offendēd in heuē and
afore the, make me as one of thy labourers. Now
here þ publicā, þ for the cōscience of his spns dare
nat lyfte vp his eies heuēward, dare nat come neare
þ auer, but stād þg a far, he knocketh on his brest
& sayth: Lord haue mercy on me a synnet. He as-
keth whose affectiōs turned cōtrary, of a drōker
is made sob̄e, of a rebāude chaste, of a gluttō ter-
perate

perate of a bzbour beneficial of a lewde speker a
good sayer of a dissebler a playn man of a crabbi
the a lowly mā of cruell mercifull. He knocketh þ
with deuoute importunatnes i a maner cōpelleth
þ mercy of god neuer cessyng to exercise warkes
of mercy on his neighbour. Crie to our lord haue
mercy but & thou wylt be herd se that thou here
hym agayne. He crieth in his membres the sücke
& nedy. Here if thou stoppe thyn eare he wyl nat
here the agayne calling to hym. He is refreshed in
his poure folkes in them he thyseth, hungreth,
sickeneth, & pyneth: in them he is dispised & offē-
ded. But more vnshamefastly saith he to our lord:
Haue mercy vpō me whiche only will nat refresh
his brother but also vexeth hym vndeserued op-
presseth þ weake betrayeth the innocent, spoyleth
the poure, begyleth the harmles. Continyng
in those dedes he calleth on the mercy of our lord
in beyne. If they that do nat refreſh the Christ i his
membres ſhal here: Go ye cursed folkes in to þ fyre
everlastyng: What ſhall they here that reuile ſpyt
at, mocke, beate, punyſhe, ſkander, & ſlie Christ
in his membres: If I be nat diſcypued ther is a ſe-
tence amonge the mynes puplians worthy for a
christen mā: In gyuring he receyued a benefit, þ
gave hym þ was worthy to haue it. Why ſyckelſt
at it thou froward ponderer of an others dignitē:
He gyueth to one worthy of it, þ gyueth to the mē-
bre of Christ: he gyueth to one worthy, þ gyueth
to his brother. And ſo forth he gyueth to one wor-
thy, who ſo euer for Iesuſ loue gyueth to a poure
creas

creature. If thou seke wynnynge/ play the bluser
with him: if thou dredde peyne/ thou hast wherby
thou mayst rede me it. After Sharpe rebuke/ What
sayth our lorde in þ gospel/ Yet gyue almes/ sayth
he/ and se all thinges be clene vnto you. Whan te-
pest of the see is redy to drenche the/ thou syckest
nat to cast thy marchandise in to the see (be hit ne-
uer so precious) to sauē thy life: Whan the venge-
ance of god hangeth ouer the/ doth it greue the to
dispose a lyttell money on thy neyghbour: What
woldest þ leauē vndone/ if thy house were a fyre:
But what burnyng is so dredefull as the anger of
god: Whan his anger sodaynly flameth vp/ wylt
nat vse the remedy that is shewed to quenche hit:
What, wylt thou say: Who sheweth hit: That ver-
ry good man Sitach: Water sayth he/ quenches
flamynge fyre/ and almes dede withstandeth syn-
nes. Almes dede knoweth nat bosting/ other wise
he loseth her name. They that gyue almes with
a trumpe blowynge before, they gyue nat almes
but bye glory. For conclusion almes before god is
whan thy lyfte hāde knoweth nat what thy right
hande doth. But sayth he/ thy treasure in the co-
mandementes of god/ and it shall profit the more
thā gold: close thy almes/ in þ poure mans hart/
and it shall delyuer the frō all yuell. Thy treasure
is neuer so sure buryed or hydde/ as in the poure
mans hart. It is far better locked ther in than in
thy yron chestis. Forget that thou hast gyuen: let
nat þ poure man knowe/ if it may be/ who is þ au-
tor of the good dede. Whan thy nede requireth an
inter-

intercessor, the almes shall nat be dūme, but shall
opteyne of our lord, that thou ydydest succour
thy neyghbour in any trouble, shalt be delyuered
from all yll. Wyll ye here almes dede speakeynge?
Come ye blessed children of my father, for whan I
hūgred, ye gaue me meate: whan I thyrstyd, ye
gaue me drynke: whan I was naked, ye clothed
me: whan I wāted lodgyng, ye lodged me: whā
I was sycke, ye viseted me: whan I was in pris
on, ye came to me. They remembre nat they bes
nelites, and say: O lord whan dyd we se the wā
tyngē those chynges, and succoured the? The o
ther part reherseth they vertues, and they here:
Go ye into cuetlasyng fire. Shal nat almes dede
thā be here a good spokē womā, that shal delyuer
vs from helle, that is from all mischief; and shall
ioyne vs to our lord souaigne of al goodnes: What
resteth now most dere b̄retherſi, but that we must
beseeche the mercy of our lord, to graunte vs that
we may be mercifull to our neyghbour, leſt if we
here ſet naught by his mercy, ſhall aftward reque
it in bayne, but the moze we be prouoked by mer
cy here, the more ſharpe we ſhall fynde his iudges
met. Let mercy toward our b̄retherne ouercome
in vs wordly affeſtions, that in god mercy toward
vs maye ouercome iugement. So hit ſhall come
to paſſe, that we with greable myndes to gether
ſhall ſyngē the mercyes of oure lord for cuet, as
knowlegynge his mercies aboue all his warkes.
To whom be preife and glori through all coſtis of
the erthe for cuet more, Amen.

Chapter to the reader.

Doost gentyll reder/take in worth in y rude translation/though all be nat as
I wolde. And where Stipis is englissched an halpeny/3 dyd i nat of igno-
rence/but because they use in Englande to g yu halpence in almes.

Chapter to the reader
A good table for them that shall rede this sermon/and vnder-
standen at Latin and frenche termes/used in englyshe.

Conscribe/to yeld or clayme to one.
Accompted/cast or reckened.
Assembled gethered to gether.
Attent yue/inwardly markyng.
Abominable/lothesome.
Ancient/aged or olde.
Accept/to take or allowe.
Angelical/heuenly.
Affliction/payne or grefe.
Adde/to put or lay more to.
Augmenteth/maketh more.
Aduoutrice/a woman aduoutr.
Abandonyng is taken for my susyng.
Arbitrement/wyll or opinion.
Abiecte/lowe or out cast.
Accomplysched/done or fulfylled.
Amplifieth/maketh more large.
Aduocatrice/ is a woman that ple-
deth causes or matters.
Brefely/soone or shortly.
Benigne is he that well and wot-
hyl rewardeth.
Bounte/goodnes.
Brute/vnwytted dull or slowe.
blaspheme/to speke yll or by leude
sayeng to hynder ones honour..
Concerneth toucheth.
Confounded/troubled or all out of
square and order.
Compelleteth/constrayneth by force.
Comytsyn/to do synne.
Calamite/wretchednes or grefe.
Comprehende/perceyue or ynder-
stande.
Confidence/sure hope.
Conquered/got by fyght.
Compolicion/a treaty.
Crise/synne blame or skaunder.
Comendacion/preye.
Complecteth/clippeth conteyneth
consydereth or remembret.
Clemency/mercy or pite.
Congregacion/acopany gethered.
Conuersacion/maner in synginge.
Coferred/one thig laid to an other
Celebrate/worshyp or honour.

Carnall/fleshye.
Contemplacion/diligent consideraciō
Coformite semelynes or shappe.
Coatemne/set at naught.
Coniskeith is whā a prince soneth
on a man goddes for a yted.
Dedicate is a thyng done and ges-
ued by cause of honour.
Direct/to leade shewe or direcō.
Distruction/marryng.
Distincion/difference or diuidyng.
Divined/denied or truly spoken as
well of thynges present as past.
Discipline/leynyng.
Difficile/harde or vneasy.
Deiecte/cast or threwe.
Deprived/put from.
Exciteth/stereth vp or awakeneth.
Expedient/profitable good necessa-
ry or behouefull.
Expressed/she wed playnly.
Eloquent/fayre langaged.
Effectuous or effectuall is hit that
to do a thyng hath power and wot-
keth moche.
Exhalte/to prease vp on high.
Expelled/driven out.
Erudite/well learned.
Excellent/exceedyng.
Enterprise/taken on hande.
Extolleth/auanceith enhauanceth
lyfeth vp or preyseth.
Encountred/met with.
Excesse/more than ynough.
Exerceth/clippeth.
Employe/exercise or put forth.
Enuiron/compasse or set about.
Etemall/euerlastyng.
Enormite/out of measure.
Felicitate/prosperite or welthe.
Founacion/hore hauaerunge.
Fugitiue/vanyschysenglyghty.
Fruition/frutefull delite.
Fortifeth/strengetheth
Humayne/is what that belongeth
yn to mankynde.

horrible / dredfull or erkesome.
humilitie / lowlynes or mekenes.
Incredible / vnneth to be beleuē.
Infinite / without ende.
Interpretate / expounde or declare.
Iniury / harme or wronge.
Infamous / yll named.
Inhabitantis / dwellers.
Incontinent / i horly or by andby.
Ineffable / ynspekeable.
Incomparable / without pere.
Iniquite / vnrightrouines / wickednes.
Infirmitees / sickenes or diseases.
Insolent / vnwont or vnused / and is
taken for prouide presumptuousnes.
Indurate / made harde or hardned.
Liberallite / free or gentyl.
Mortall is he that muste dye.
Misery / sorowe or wretchednes.
Multitude / moche folke gethered.
Mirade / a maruayle or a wonder.
Mysticall / figured.
Mansions / dwellynges.
Magnifie / to crake or boste.
Monys / heith / warneheth.
Memory / remembrance.
Mollifereh / soupleth / tendreth or
maketh softe.
Necessites / medis.
Odious / hatefull.
Obiecteth / putteh casteth or
layeth agaynst.
Prohibited / let or forbiden.
Prosecute is whan the mynde is
bent towarde one to fauour hate
or loue hym / to folowe the same.
Preceptes / teachynges.
Presumptuous is whan one taketh
ypon hym that he ought nat.
Pondred / waryed or confydered.
Pestilent / mischeuous.
Perdicion / losse.
Perpetuall / styllor contynual.

Pnissatee / myght or power.
Parabol / a similiuite or lykenes.
Piuuent / come or takefyrist.
Procedeth / holdeth on.
Prescribeith / lymytteth marketh
or appoynteith before.
Pleasant / gaye to ones mynde.
Polluted / be durted.
Preiudice / harme.
Profounde / depe.
Prodigall / riottons.
Rude / vnlerned.
Redoundeth / returneth.
Reproche / reprofe or blame.
Repeled / rehersed or spokē agayne.
Reconciled / fauourably returned.
Regarde / beholde.
Rapine / robbery.
Resisteth / withstandeth.
Reduce / to bryngē in agayne.
Subtile / wrytē.
Superstitiousnes or superstition /
is rayne deuocion.
Seruously / sadly or ernestly.
Solemnē / customeable.
Satanas / the dyuell / whiche is to
say an aduersary.
Stablishe / surely greunde.
Sagasite / quicke or crafty.
Scarbet / in some places of Englāds
is called a dorre / in som other places
a shernebod / it is lyke a hibullbee /
it is blacke / it fleteth in the evenynge
and falleth in beastis doune.
Testimony / wrymes.
Transitory / is it that lyghtly goth.
Temporall / duryng a tyme.
Vile / yttell worthe.
Usurpe / to take ypon.
Veritable / true.
Violate / breke.
Vanquished / ouercome.

¶finis.

¶Thus endeth the sermon of the excedinge mercy
of god. Imprinted at London in Fleetstrete /
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kynges most noble grace, dwellyng
at the sygne of Lucece.

Cum primitio.

